

The Listener

Published every Thursday by the British Broadcasting Corporation.



Summer scene: cricket on Putney Heath

In this number:

The German Surrender at Lüneburg Heath (Lord Montgomery)

Negro Citizens in the U.S.A. (Alistair Cooke)

What Is There in Horse Racing? (John Wisdom)



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The Listener

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What is at Stake in Indo-China

By ROBERT GUILLAIN

IT is not fully realised by the general public how important it is for France, and indeed the whole western world, that a cease-fire in Indo-China should come early. The military situation in the Red River delta remains so dangerous for the Franco-Viet-Nameese forces that, if operations continue, we may soon come again to a point when American intervention will have to be considered, and with it an inevitable enlargement of the conflict. For a simple fact must be emphasised: this war is too much for France alone. If it goes on, further calamities are bound to come, unless our forces are supplemented with those of other countries, not only with aircraft and ships, but also with men. I need not say that there is no more earnest wish in France than to avoid coming to such an extremity.

Has this truth, that the war is too much for France alone, been fully understood after the tragedy of Dien Bien Phu? I am afraid it has not. An armistice conference is going on at Geneva, it is true, but, meanwhile, France continues to fight, and to fight alone with the help only of her Indo-Chinese associates. She has thus been brought to decide on even bigger sacrifices in order to carry on; she has assumed even greater risks. Following the mission of General Ely, our Chief of Staff, to Hanoi, we have decided to deplete our reserves in Europe and Africa in order to build up new forces in Asia. Far from decreasing, our burden in Indo-China is still growing.

Let me briefly try to analyse the military background of the

Geneva Conference. One of the dramatic consequences of Dien Bien Phu has been that the defence of the doomed fortress in the jungle has been siphoning out of the rest of Indo-China the best units among our forces. When I was there in March and April, I saw them leaving for Dien Bien Phu, unit after unit, soon to jump into that inferno. Losing these men, we have lost the *élite* of our Indo-Chinese army, the spearhead of our forces. Even before the fall of Dien Bien Phu, the Red River delta, which is the area of decision in this war, was feeling the consequences. With our defences there undermanned, the situation swiftly deteriorated. As we say, the whole delta was 'rotting'. Week after week, since February, we have been losing the defence posts which were guarding lines of communications or key positions throughout the red-infested rice-fields. I understand that the rate of our losses every month has been a dozen of these defence posts, and several thousand men, mostly Viet-Nameese.

The process is still going on. During the last months in Tonkin, I have known, and there still continue to be, dozens of forgotten little Dien Bien Phus, slowly strangled by the Viet-Minh besiegers. The trend in the delta is often described as an infiltration of the communists in a country held by the French and Viet-Nameese forces. But, as a battalion commander on the spot told me: 'It is the reverse which is true. It is we who are infiltrating in a country which is held by the *Viet*'. Indeed we can hardly speak of enemy infiltration when in fact more than 90,000 of them are waging war

against us right in the heart of the delta. And they are no mere guerrilla fighters: they represent one full division of regular troops, as well as two regular regiments, and, in almost all districts, provincial and regional battalions and companies which are now as efficient and as well-armed as the regulars.

A New Threat

A formidable new threat will soon appear from outside, supplementing these forces inside the triangle. The army that besieged and stormed Dien Bien Phu has now been on the move since the middle of May, coming down towards Hanoi, through jungles so deep that, with the further obstacle of the rains, our air force can do little to slow down their march. They should be reaching the fringes of the delta before July.

It is estimated that Giap had committed some 50,000 men for the capture of Dien Bien Phu. They included three out of his seven infantry divisions and one artillery division. His losses in men have been extremely heavy, probably between 15,000 and 20,000 casualties. It is believed, nevertheless, that the Viet-Minh army can fast replace their losses. Throughout Indo-China they have a vast pool of provincial, regional, and guerrilla forces on which they can draw to replenish their regular divisions. Moreover, this spring they were already conducting an intensive recruitment campaign. It is believed that they had two new divisions in the making, while in the very delta under our nose two more regular regiments were being trained. The vast arsenal of American-made arms taken at Dien Bien Phu will be another asset for them. We are, therefore, fast coming to a situation when the fate of Hanoi, the big city in the delta, which Ho Chi-minh wants as his capital, will be in the balance. The Viet-Minh is already fighting to isolate the town, and, when it is done, they may launch an all-out assault. There are many indications that Giap, the communist general, will not interrupt his campaign during the rainy season, contrary to what happened in all previous summers. He has already succeeded in his effort to render impassable, for the greater part of the day, the road and railway which are the only links between Hanoi and the port of Haiphong. Can Hanoi hold, if the enemy put all their forces in an assault against the city?

Our diplomats in Geneva have sent to our generals an urgent plea: Hanoi must hold, they say, if they are to try for a settlement. It is evident that an eventual fall of Hanoi, coming as a new Dien Bien Phu, would strike a disastrous blow at our attempt to negotiate peace. Moreover, our representatives in Geneva feel that if we can hold fast and keep at least Hanoi, Haiphong, and a corridor in between, we would thus keep at least one trump card, one of the few we still have in our hands, in our negotiations with the Viet-Minh. It would be folly, they claim, to throw it away if we can avoid it. We should maintain or restore in Hanoi a position of strength, they say, as long as a cease-fire has not been signed. There is a third reason for keeping Hanoi, or at least a bridgehead in the Red River delta. It is the fact that the alternative would be a retreat and an Indo-Chinese Dunkirk, which would have to be carried out under the most difficult conditions. For one thing, the French navy has not enough ships available, so that evacuation from Haiphong would take at least six months.

Drastic Decisions

The mission of General Ely and his associates to Hanoi has to consider, among other questions, whether satisfaction can be given to this pressing request of our diplomacy. They have apparently replied that this is possible. They claim to have confidence that Hanoi can be held, under certain conditions. Drastic decisions, therefore, have just been taken. French and Viet-Nameese forces in southern Indo-China will abandon a number of current military operations in central and south Viet-Nam and will be sent as reinforcements to the north. Then—and this is the boldest move of all—our forces at home and in Africa will immediately send reinforcements to Indo-China, drawn from our professional army.

Two French cruisers have lately left Toulon, sailing for Haiphong with a first batch of troops on board. The Viet-Minh should now know that Hanoi will be defended, that its capture may be extremely costly, and that the town, if finally taken, will probably have been reduced to ruins as the result of a long siege. We hope that this will prevent them from using delaying tactics in Geneva with the aim of postponing the cease-fire until they have taken Hanoi.

There is no attempt on our side to conceal that the decisions that we are just taking are good enough to save the situation for the duration of this summer, but possibly not much longer. If no cease-fire has been signed, say, by the end of August, new and more drastic decisions will have to be taken. The indications are that our Government would ask from the National Assembly permission to send to Indo-China the young 1954 conscripts to supplement our professional army. It is probable that before such a move, which would be very unpopular, a new request would be made for full-scale United States military intervention. It is my personal opinion that the French Government must be calculating that the coming months will see a further evolution of American public opinion. If they think that the conference in Geneva is leading nowhere, and if France has to face a new military campaign continuing into 1955, the United States Government can hardly help taking an active part in the war, even before the November elections.

Attempts for Peace

In Geneva recently I was shocked to find that in the corridors of the conference there was a common belief that, after all, the danger of the third world war has by no means receded, or at least of a big war in the Far East, involving China and the United States. On the contrary, it was coming to the fore again, as at the worst period of the Korean war. Russia and China must know this, too; and it may be that there lie some of our best hopes. There is a strong feeling in Geneva at present that peace will largely depend on the moderating influence that Moscow and Peking can have on the Viet-Minh right now. The British delegation is evidently working hard, as a 'go-between', to make this clear to the communist delegates and help reason to prevail in both the eastern and the western camps—French public opinion has been grateful to Mr. Eden for his efforts in favour of peace. Indeed, some fear that the moderating influence from the British will be further needed and, we may even hope, from the Russians themselves, even if there is a cease-fire in Indo-China; for the situation there is likely to remain fraught with the possibility of new storms. The dominant factor seems to be, in my opinion, that on the western side nobody is prepared to adopt in Indo-China the solution which the British adopted in India seven years ago—that is, to pull out completely. The difference is, of course, that the retreat from Indo-China would be in the face of communism, which was not the case in India. Moreover, even if France wanted to pull out, there is every reason to believe that she would not be allowed to do so by the United States, in view of her obligations to the west.

And still, I cannot help wondering whether we are not all taking the wrong path in south-east Asia, when we continue thinking of territories which we should keep, when we speak in terms of military lines to defend and of armies to stop communism. What is at stake is much more than the local problem in that area. It is the role of our western civilisation and the place of the white man in the world. What we need is to devise a *modus vivendi* for our ancient world in face of this upsurge of a new yellow world in Asia. Are we not committing a folly when we forget that Asia was opened by us, in the last centuries, not so much by our guns and our armies as by our ideas and our trade? Is it not a fact that in Asia today the white man is hated when he bears arms? When, in order to sustain our cause, we build military alliances and raise Asian armies to fight Asians, are we not throwing into the arms of the communists the very men that we wanted to protect?

—Third Programme

The German Surrender at Lüneburg Heath

Broadcast by Field-Marshal LORD MONTGOMERY on the tenth anniversary of D-Day

ON May 2, 1945, the British Group of Armies under my command reached the Baltic. The Russian Northern Army Group was moving fast in a westerly direction north of Berlin, driving the Germans before them. We knew then the war was won. It was the end of a long road which had been travelled with much loss and suffering, but also with courage and fortitude unsurpassed in the history of the British Army.

The Allied armies had landed in France on June 6, 1944, had fought a great battle in Normandy, and had then swept through France and Belgium and entered Germany. Very heavy fighting took place on the frontiers of Germany; but we were now deep into the heart of that country and all that remained for the once renowned German armies was to sue for peace on the best terms they could get. Hitler was dead and Grand-Admiral Doenitz had been named as his successor; he was prepared to end the war but not to surrender to the Russians.

On the morning of May 3 a delegation of five German officers arrived at my headquarters on Lüneburg Heath. They had come through the British lines with a flag of truce and reached my headquarters at eleven o'clock. The delegation was composed as follows: General-Admiral Von Friedeburg, C.-in-C. German Navy; General Kinzel, Chief of Staff to Field-Marshal Busch, who was C.-in-C. of the Northern Group of German Armies; Rear-Admiral Wagner, Chief of Staff to Grand-Admiral Doenitz; Colonel Poleck, who was on the staff of Field-Marshal Keitel, the head of the Wehrmacht; and Major Friedel, who had been personal A.D.C. to Hitler. When I heard they had arrived I ordered they be lined up under the Union Jack, flying proudly on a high flagpole outside my



May 3, 1945, the Germans ask for peace terms: delegates from the German High Command saluting Field-Marshal Montgomery at his headquarters at Lüneburg Heath



caravans. I then left my caravan and walked towards them. They were in charge of Colonel Ewart, one of my staff who spoke German. They all saluted me as I walked towards them. It was a great moment: the Germans at the salute under the Union Jack. The Germans had come to surrender. I have a photograph of the scene, which I treasure greatly.

I said to Colonel Ewart: 'Who are these men?' He told me. I then said: 'What do they want?' Friedeburg then read me a letter from Keitel saying the Germans would surrender if they were

The German delegates confer among themselves at Lüneburg Heath

given terms. I said there would be no terms; it must be unconditional surrender, or continue the war. Admiral Friedeburg then asked me if I would accept the unconditional surrender of all the German armies withdrawing in front of the Russians. I said 'Certainly not. They must surrender to the Russians'. Friedeburg said they would all be killed by the Russians and this did not seem a very humane way of doing things. I replied that the Germans should have thought of all these things before they started the war. I said that any German soldiers who came towards my front, unarmed and holding up their hands, would be taken prisoner in the usual way. I then thought I would show them the true battle position on a map. When the Germans saw the map they realised the situation was hopeless, and showed it in their faces.

I decided the moment had come to play for big stakes. I suddenly asked Friedeburg, without any warning: 'Will you surrender to me all the German armed forces, land, sea, and air, in Holland, north-west Germany including Heligoland and the Frisian Islands, Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark, and Norway? If you will do this at once, I will accept that battlefield surrender and will fly you all down to General Eisenhower to discuss larger surrender of the German forces as a whole'.



Signing of the surrender terms, May 4, 1945: seated round the table (left to right) are Rear-Admiral Wagner, General-Admiral von Friedeburg, Field-Marshal Montgomery, General Kinzel, and Colonel Poleck

This demand was unexpected, and they all five started talking amongst themselves excitedly. It seemed to me they thought there were definite possibilities about this. I said they had better go and have lunch and I would see them again at 2 p.m. I sent them to one of the officers' messes for lunch. They were all very silent during lunch. Von Friedeburg sat alone with tears streaming down his face. After a quick lunch they got together in the trees outside the mess and had a good talk.

The Capitulation

At 2 p.m. I sent for them to see me. Friedeburg said there were certain difficulties. I said I was not prepared to argue; if they refused my offer I would go on with the battle and would be delighted to do so. He saw it was no good and gave in. He said he had not power to agree himself but he would go at any rate to see Doenitz at Flensburg, and would recommend the acceptance of my terms. He asked only one thing: to exclude Norway from this particular surrender as that was a different Command. It would cause much delay and they must act quickly. I agreed to exclude Norway, knowing that the freeing of that country from the German yoke would follow in a day or two. I said he could go, but he must be back by 5 p.m. the next day, May 4. Friedeburg left at once by car for Flensburg. He left behind in my camp General Kinzel and Colonel Poleck. He was back at 5 p.m. the next day and the delegation again paraded under the Union Jack.

I sent for Friedeburg to come and see me alone in my caravan. I asked for his answer. He said he would sign the surrender as demanded by me. I had the document all ready. He was very dejected and I told him to rejoin the others outside. I then gave orders for the ceremony to take place at 6 o'clock that evening in a tent I had pitched for the purpose. There were groups of soldiers, war correspondents, photographers, and others, all very excited, watching the German delegation enter the tent. Chester Wilmot was there and I can see him now walking about with a microphone, recording the whole affair for the B.B.C. Everyone knew it was the end of the war.

The scene in the tent was very simple. A trestle table, covered with an army blanket, an inkpot; and an ordinary army pen that you could buy in a shop for twopence. There were two B.B.C. microphones on the table, and nothing else. We all sat round the table. One of the Germans took out a cigarette; he wanted to smoke to calm his nerves. I looked at him and he put away the cigarette. I read the surrender document in English. None of the Germans could speak English and they did not understand any of it. But they had been shown a copy in German. I then made each one in turn get up and come to where I was sitting, sign my copy and the German copy, and return to his seat. I then signed on behalf of General Eisenhower, and added the time and date, 1830 hours May 4, 1945. I made a mistake and wrote May 5 and had to cross it out and initial the erasure. Copies of the English draft were made and went to Supreme Headquarters. And I telephoned at once to General Eisenhower and told him all about it. I was asked for the original. I refused to part with it and I will never do so; I have it safely put away with my private papers. It is a very historic document. I do not know what happened to the pen. I gave the German copy to Friedeburg.

Once the surrender was signed there was much to be done. I had ordered all offensive action to cease on May 3 when the Germans first came to see me; I knew it was the end and I did not want any more casualties among the troops entrusted to my care. We had reached the end of the road. I went to my caravan and sat there alone for a while. My thoughts went back to Dunkirk, to Alamein, to the desert war, Sicily, Italy, and the beaches of Normandy. I wrote out an Order of the Day. The last sentence read: 'We have won the German war. Let us now win the peace'.

I often think back to those two days on Lüneburg Heath, and to the splendid soldiers I commanded from Alamein to the heart of Germany. We must see to it that those who gave their lives did not make the sacrifice in vain and we must work together for a just and lasting peace.

In a broadcast from Lüneburg Heath on the tenth anniversary of D-Day, RICHARD DIMBLEBY said: 'Through the rain and the wind and the trees round us, we cannot see the lights of Lüneburg. Now it is a British Brigade area. Not very far away there lie the remains of the infamous camp of Belsen; not far down the road there is a red brick villa which I saw today, in the front downstairs room of which Himmler committed suicide after he had been captured. And down in the town there is a schoolhouse where the Belsen trial was held. But Himmler and

the Belsen trial—all those things—happened after the supreme moment. The greatest history of all was written on this spot.

'In front of me, as I look, there is a solitary stone on a plinth, surrounded by little white posts, linked by heavy black chains; a gravel path, a small lawn. Opposite, I can just see, across a narrow lane, a grove of trees, and between two of the silver trees there, there stood, nine years ago, the caravans of Field-Marshal Montgomery, and in front of them a Union Jack flying from a high flag-staff. And up the lane, on my left hand, came the German Generals for the surrender.

'What is the German attitude to this place, so carefully guarded and protected now? I don't think that I really understand it. A German gardener clips the grass of this lawn; and this afternoon, as we were up here in bright sunshine under a blue sky, a young German came along with his girl friend, and put her in front of the memorial stone, and photographed her there, taking a happy snapshot of her, leaning up against the stone which told the story of the downfall of her own nation. On that stone there is an inscription, and it reads: "Here on the 4th May, 1945, a delegation from the German High Command surrendered unconditionally to Field-Marshal Montgomery, all land, sea and air forces, in North-West Germany, Denmark and Holland".

'Even as we remember tonight, the parties of Germans that we have seen coming up here today to see the stone and to picnic quite cheerfully nearby, we have to remember, amidst all this solemnity, that only a few hours ago we stood in a shipyard in Hamburg, not many miles away, and watched the biggest oil tanker in the world being launched; and within ten minutes of its launching they were laying the keel of another ship, because they are so busy and so hard at work. There, perhaps, lies the answer to what I do not quite understand'.

Foundations of Victory

By LORD TEDDER, who introduced the D-Day broadcast

AT THIS MOMENT ten years ago, the first waves of Allied troops were already overrunning German defences along the Normandy coast. Four years earlier we had left France by way of the beaches at Dunkirk, and on the afternoon of June 4, 1940, it had been the grim duty of the Prime Minister to lay those tragic facts before the House of Commons and the nation. And yet in that darkest hour, the first seeds of the liberation of Europe were sown. On the prophetic date, June 6, 1940, the Prime Minister dictated the first of a long series of notes for the design and construction of landing craft for the return to Europe.

Although today it is on the invasion of Europe and its triumphant sequel that our minds are set, let us never forget that it was the bitter struggles of those intervening years that alone made the invasion project thinkable. In May 1943 it became possible to estimate what land forces would be available and also to fix the provisional date—May 1, 1944. A planning staff was created, and from that point onwards D-Day moulded war strategy for a year ahead on land, sea, and in the air. Never before in military history had a planning staff been charged with a task of such magnitude and such awful responsibility. To begin with, the area for the assault had to be chosen, and bearing upon that decision every conceivable factor affecting probable enemy opposition on a date still twelve months ahead had to be thought out and allowed for. Plans had to be made for the concentration in England, from other fronts or from across the Atlantic, of an army of nearly 1,750,000 men, and there also had to be planned a similar concentration of naval and other vessels, conventional and unconventional, more than 4,000 of them, ready to transport and support this army across the Channel on the appointed day.

Great Anglo-American air forces were already operating against Germany, and their operations had to be re-assessed and adjusted to prepare the way for the assaults. A new air plan had to be set in motion to cover the widespread preparations in England, to counter the new threat of the 'doodlebugs' and rockets, and to disorganise and deceive the enemy, who was only twenty-two miles away at the nearest point, and all this many weeks before the actual landings in Normandy. The hazards of the operation the Allies were about to launch were enormous, but as far as was humanly possible each hazard was foreseen and the dangers coldly assessed in the light of our available knowledge and experience. And in making these decisions, we also took into full account the hope, faith, courage, and determination of every man and woman who had to take part in the D-Day operation.

—Light Programme

The Hydrogen Bomb—III

The Political Background

By WILLIAM CLARK

THE hydrogen bomb seems so new and so terrifying that it is difficult to realise that the problem of its political control has been before us in the west for nine years. It was in June 1945 that the first petition for control of atomic energy was presented, several weeks before the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

That petition was presented by a large number of people working on the atomic project at the University of Chicago. I happen to have a vivid recollection of that affair because I knew so many of the people involved. Before the war I had taught at the University of Chicago, and in August 1945 I was back there on business on the day the news of Hiroshima was released. I was dining with a group of the atomic scientists and I remember that they were united on only one point: their determination to press ahead with their plans for agitating in favour of international control. One of them said to me—then, in 1945—‘This atom bomb’s only the beginning, there could be other bombs far worse. It’s control or else . . . Either we control it or it will destroy us’.

Control Considered at the Quebec Meeting

In fact, though we did not know it, the politicians were already at work. The problem of control had been considered by the heads of states as early as the Quebec meeting in 1943. We know now that at that time Britain and America agreed to share information, since the bomb had been developed as the result of just such sharing. It was also agreed that America would not use the bomb against any other nation without consulting Britain.

The exact relevance of this agreement has become a matter of controversy in this country in recent months. It was in any case a war-time agreement made secretly before the existence of the bomb was generally known. The decision to use the bomb at Hiroshima appears to have been made mainly on the authority of the American President, Mr. Truman, with the advice of his Secretary of War, Mr. Stimson. But certainly Britain was made aware of the decision, and even Marshal Stalin was told at the Potsdam Conference of the existence and powers of the bomb. But once the bomb had been used, and its appalling effect demonstrated, the question of its future control became an immediate and urgent problem. This problem was also complicated by two factors: first, the two heads of states primarily responsible for developing the atom bomb had ceased to govern their countries; and second, in Canada—the third state involved—the revelations of the Gouzenko spy plot highlighted the gulf that was growing between Russia and the west.

It was in this confused and troubled atmosphere that Mr. Attlee, the new Prime Minister of Britain, and Mr. Truman, still in his early days as President of the United States, met in November 1945 in Washington to discuss the problems of atomic control. They were joined by Mr. Mackenzie King of Canada, and held their discussion in the utmost secrecy on the presidential yacht sailing up and down the Potomac. At the end of that conference the first public international declaration about the future control of atomic energy was issued. And for the first time we see all the problems raised which still dog the footsteps of those who try to control atomic energy. President Truman, Mr. Attlee, and Mr. Mackenzie King proposed that a special commission should be appointed by the United Nations to make specific proposals on the following points: first, the exchange of information on atomic science between all nations; second, control of atomic energy to secure its use for peaceful purposes only; third, the elimination of atomic weapons and other mass-destruction weapons; fourth (and this is the key problem), for creating effective safeguards by way of inspection and other means to protect the world against the hazards of violation and evasion of the rule against having any atom bombs.

Looking back at it, it is surprising to find that at Moscow in December 1945 Mr. Bevin and Mr. Byrnes (the American Secretary of State) had little or no difficulty in getting Mr. Molotov to agree to the setting up of this commission with these terms of reference. On January 24, 1946, the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission

was set up. But before it even got to work the problem in front of it was immensely complicated by a report on the realities of atomic control by a group of American scientists, who alone had the technical knowledge to say what was needed. Their report, which was called the Lilienthal Report, after its chairman, made it perfectly clear that a system of international inspection by a team of United Nations experts was not sufficient safeguard against the misuse of peaceful atomic energy and its diversion to war-time issues.

Up to then, I believe, all of us had thought that the process of atomic control would go something like this: the United States would share its know-how with other countries, atomic energy stations would be built all over the world, but they would be inspected to see that they were being used only for peaceful purposes. When this system was working the American stockpiles of bombs would be destroyed. Heaven knows that was a sufficiently revolutionary scheme—to have foreign inspectors examining the industrial works of sovereign nations. But what the Lilienthal Report disclosed went much further. It made it clear that the production of atomic energy would itself have to be carried on by an international body. That meant that sovereign nations would have to accept not just foreign inspectors on their soil, but foreign factories run by a foreign (or rather international) authority. In fact many people recognised that this meant the beginning of a world authority that was itself an embryo world government.

Yet stark alternatives faced the people of America and her allies: either atomic bombs were to be uncontrolled and present an incalculable menace, or serious sacrifices must be made in national sovereignty. The American Administration chose the second path, and in June 1946 their representative at the United Nations, Mr. Bernard Baruch, put forward his famous proposals, which embody the conclusions of the Lilienthal Report. But at the same time the American Congress was asserting the powers of American sovereignty in atomic matters. The MacMahon Act was passed in an attempt to maintain the American monopoly of the bomb. It increased all the penalties for disclosing information about atomic energy, and made it illegal for Americans to share their knowledge with their allies.

The Baruch plan was very different, it was genuinely internationalist. The ‘complete managerial control’ of the production of all aspects of atomic energy was to be in the hands of an international authority, the Atomic Development Authority of the United Nations. It would own the plants producing atomic materials and their products, it might license some ‘safe’ operations to local national authorities, but they would be strictly inspected. If there was the slightest evidence of any violation of the rules—that is, an attempt by one nation to create bombs for itself—there were to be immediate sanctions and severe punishments. Only when the A.D.A. was fully operating would the United States surrender its stock of atom bombs, of which, in 1946, it still had a complete monopoly.

Points Raised by the U.S.S.R.

When these proposals were put forward the Soviet Union fastened on two points. The first was the question of punishment of violators, which they said must be carried out only by the Security Council with the safeguard of the veto. Mr. Baruch had pointed out that the veto could not operate in so dangerous a case. Though this issue was so much discussed and so heavily argued, it was, in my opinion, an academic side issue. Either the question of veto would be dealt with in the treaty setting up the authority, or it would be ignored when the occasion arose. No nation attempting to build atomic bombs could take refuge behind the veto, because no other powerful nation would allow a legalism to stop it from taking action to save its life.

The second point raised by Mr. Gromyko, the Russian representative, was the question of the destruction of stocks of bombs. Remember at this time America had the only stock of atom bombs, and proposed to destroy them *after* the World Atomic Authority was in effective control of all sources of atomic energy. Russia demanded that it should be done *before* the A.D.A. had come into existence, that is, before there

were any safeguards. America refused such a unilateral sacrifice.

The essential difference between the American and Russian viewpoints became clear in the course of the debate. America's representative, with the support of ten out of twelve members of the Security Council, was prepared to take the hard way of outlawing atomic war. That way meant building up an authority which could ensure that no country was capable of sudden, surprise aggression by atomic war: it was a long and difficult course to pursue but it would have been effective. Russia, it appeared, wished to begin by a paper agreement to destroy all atomic weapons, and then to consider ways of enforcing the ban afterwards. This gave the Soviet delegate a slogan, 'ban the atom bomb', but it did not give the world any practicable solution to the terrible problem it was in.

The debate wrangled on through the summer and autumn of 1946, getting nowhere. In October 1949 the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission reported that Russia had held up agreement on atomic control for three years. But Russia had put the three years of wrangling to good account by her standards. In September 1949 President Truman announced that conclusive evidence had been received that Russia had exploded her first atom bomb.

The end of the American monopoly only made the situation far more hazardous. There were renewed but absolutely vain efforts to make the Atomic Energy Commission a going concern. In a final effort France, the United States, and the United Kingdom had the idea of a new

start by means of a general Disarmament Commission, which would try to work out ways of reducing armaments as well as controlling atomic energy, so that it could be used for peaceful development and could not be used for war.

In January 1952 the General Assembly of the United Nations accepted a resolution establishing this Disarmament Commission. The Soviet bloc voted against it, but the Commission has continued its work to this day, and has had the wisdom to establish a sub-committee dealing primarily with atomic affairs and meeting in secret. It was to this sub-committee that President Eisenhower referred in his famous speech at the end of the Bermuda Conference last December. He proposed that the powers principally concerned with atomic energy, including Russia, should meet in private and discuss the peaceful uses of atomic energy and the setting up of an international pool of nuclear materials, and the diminution of the dangerous potential of the stock piles of atomic bombs—which by this time was believed to contain hydrogen bombs in both the American and Soviet camps. That is the position with which the current Disarmament Conference is faced in London.

But I think it wise to end by a reminder. Proposals for the peaceful use of atomic energy are excellent, but control of its use to prevent an atomic war is essential. No one has yet shown any reason to believe that we can do without the Baruch Plan or some similar limitation of national sovereignty.—*European Service*

Negro Citizens in the U.S.A.

By ALISTAIR COOKE

WHEN I first went south, I was in the South but I did not know it. I had gone for the first time to visit a young man who was my first college friend in America, a young man now a doctor, who lives in Maryland on the edge of a beautiful valley outside Baltimore. In those days we had many interests in common: college friends, enthusiasms about books, jazz, girls, painters and painting. I do not see him much any more. He is a hard-working doctor and he has his family and I have mine, and when I go down to Washington the deadline is usually pressing enough to make me go straight on through Baltimore.

But this man has a special place in the history of my friendships because in the early nineteen-thirties he was a tolerant and amiable teacher to me about all things American. He had an affectionate eye for trees and flowers, and first taught me something about the great variety of American oaks, and introduced me to the pink and white dogwood and to the Maryland golden aster. He also was responsible for my first taste of crab cakes and terrapin, and for easing me into the pleasing custom, on hot summer nights, of spreading a newspaper on a table on the back porch at midnight and slicing a watermelon into quarters and then lolling back and burying my face in one of these slices, and coming up for air with a drooling sound and spitting the seeds at the moths.

Many of these pleasures came our way through the warm care and the stealthy solicitude of Miss Minn. Miss Minn was the cook, first maid, second maid, laundress, nurse, mother confessor, and hub of the household. She was the first Negro I ever knew and, to this day, is a great mystery. Even twenty years ago she admitted to no age. She was rumoured to be a grandmother, though she never seemed to know how many times. She was not so much an employee in the house as a presence, like a clock which never tells you it is there until it strikes on the hour. And hours would go by without any thought of Miss Minn, for she made no noise at all, until you would begin to feel hungry or think aloud that a glass of beer would be just the thing. And she would amble in suddenly, like a forgetful ghost, but happily carrying a tray of two beers. She was never called, and she was never out of reach. And this invested the rambling house with a mysterious sort of luxury, for, wherever you were, upstairs or down, in the garden or in the living room, she was always hovering round, giving the impression that the house was loaded with Miss Minns.

She had no politics, no grievances, and seemingly no ties. I almost said no life of her own, for this house and this family seemed to fill

all of it. But much of the raillery and lazy banter that went back and forth between the family and Miss Minn was about the tantalising echoes of another existence, that drifted to us from the edge of our world and the beginning of hers. It was a vague, timeless, whimsical world that sounded, from the hints she dropped, like the libretto of a low-life opera: in which husbands came and went, forgotten sons turned up from distant places, stayed over a carefree week-end, and consumed festival meals of snapper turtle, whole crabs dunked in beer, steaks as big as doormats, and then left, never to return, or to return as buck privates, or on crutches from a smash-up in an automobile, or with a wife and four children. Miss Minn never went into this side of her life for more than two sentences and I honestly do not know when she managed to live it, except at week-ends. She merely managed to convey that these sons and lovers and erupting relations were creatures of the imagination, who flitted like elves or animals through a quiet and shadowy forest.

Miss Minn had been with this family for thirty years and expected to die with them. She is the last of an ancient breed. I do not believe that if you put the question to her she would have had any notion what you meant by 'the Negro problem'. And we were not sufficiently in the South for the problem, whatever it is, to force itself on our daily life. As far as I knew, as I say, we were not in the South at all.

The distinction between North and South never came up until one night we were cruising round a valley in the north of the state and I happened to remark to my friend that there were no Negroes around anywhere, in any of the small towns we passed through where I had seen them by day. My friend was a big, gentle, bespectacled, laconic man. He said quietly, 'No? Let me show you something'. He turned off a side road and circled round back to town. And on the edge of this valley, where the first outposts of the suburbs began, he stopped the car, and where four roads met he walked up to a tree. Nailed to a wooden fence was a wooden sign and on it had been carefully and crudely painted this sentence: 'Nigger, don't let the sun set on you here'.

I cannot forget the chill and excitement with which I first read these words. And I have read them many times since. An excitement at the poetry of them, and a chill at the cool finality of their threat. We were very close to the northern boundary of Maryland. We were, in fact, standing at the Mason and Dixon Line. This was the line that before the Civil War divided the slave states from the so-called free soil to the North. It is called the Mason and Dixon Line after two English surveyors, Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, who in 1767 settled

an old state and colonial boundary dispute by defining once and for all the southern border of Pennsylvania. But to any American you might stop on the street today, the Mason and Dixon Line is the division between two Americas, two worlds, two social systems. And although the black man has moved, in our industrial age, to many cities north and midwest and west, the black man is historically native to the south.

Maryland was neutral in the Civil War. It is politically known as a border state. Many of its industries and its customs are northern, but once you go below Pennsylvania, the vowels are slurred, the voices are quieter, men leave their coats off in summer and, from many a gesture and casual remark and habit, you know you are in the Southland, where the white man is the boss. He is mostly a far more indulgent and considerate boss than the more frantic northern liberals could ever be, who like to storm and fret about the indignity of a whole race but who never get within hailing distance of one Negro they might help or take for a friend. Perhaps one Negro is the wrong unit, because self-conscious radical groups, and literary bohemians, will often invite to a meeting or a party any one Negro who is foolish enough to consent to stand in as a sop to their conscience.

Of the many southern words that reflect the separate life of the South, none has been more taken for granted than the word 'segregation'. I know southerners who would give endless time, money, and pride to the legal protection or neighbourly defence of the Negroes who work for them. But if you suggested that their children should go to school with Negro children, they would throw a fit. Well, they are going to throw a fit. For, as you must all have heard, the Supreme Court of the United States last week handed down a judgement that is likely to cause the most revolutionary social change in American life since, eighty-six years ago, the court decided that Negroes were American citizens like any other and entitled to the equal protection of the laws of the United States. An old judge of the Supreme Court, now long dead, once defended that earlier judgement in a famous phrase. He said 'The Constitution is colour-blind'. So it is, but the people who hope to live by it are not. And in the Southland, whose sad and profound culture ante-dates the Constitution by at least 100 years, many generations of Americans have been brought up not necessarily to believe that the Negro is an inferior human being (no southern Roman Catholic, I hope, would dare to believe any such thing) but at any rate to believe that the Negro race is an inferior race, and that its members must never mingle or intermarry with the white. It is very hard, in a limited space, to take up this great challenge to the instincts and traditions of a whole people without doing those people much clumsy injustice.

From much travelling—and stopping—round the forty-eight states of the Union, I must say myself that I respect a good deal more the sensitive and considerate relations that many southerners have with the Negroes around them than the glib social consciousness of northerners and westerners whose daily life has a guaranteed immunity from Negro problems, either because there are few of them about or because they exist conveniently in some tight, slummy corner of the big city. It is one thing to talk about equality and fair play in New York or Oregon and quite another in Alabama, where one person in three is coloured, or in Mississippi, where there are 1,000,000 whites and 1,000,000 Negroes. So, in the deep South, the mere force of numbers is a threat, if only in the minds of men, to the political and social dominance of the white men. I hate using words like dominance and superiority, because they suggest an arrogance which is not noticeable in the southern character, but when people, even the gentlest people, fear that they are being terrified or intimidated, they tend to take terrifying precautions.

'The Threatening Force of a Myth'

In the places where there are many Negroes, the black man is invested with the force, the threatening force, of a myth. Even though the daily experience of white people denies this myth, yet in their secret heart it has great vitality. It is an image of a black man who is a little slow in his wits, potent, terrible in anger. The scientists have proved this to be nonsense but human beings trust their intuition in the face of demonstrable proof that their intuition is rubbish. Some of this deep fear of the Negro may be only the cover-up of the guilt the white man feels for the way he has treated the Negro in the past. This spinning circle of guilt and fear revolves round a single fear so embarrassing that white mothers whisper it to their daughters, and intellectuals brooding over 'the Negro problem' do not even deign to consider it. It is contained in the universal question muttered behind the palm of the hand, 'You wouldn't want your daughter to marry a Negro, would you?' This is the central fear of the whites. Hitler and the late Senator

Bilbo were brutally frank enough to say that there were only two solutions to the Negro problem: intermarriage or extermination. It seems to me at least frivolous and superficial not to face the fact that after a generation or so of mixed schooling, in places where there are almost as many Negroes as whites, social barriers will fall down slowly, young people will pick their friends for their personal qualities and they will fall in love, as they do everywhere, with the girls around them.

This is a consummation which is at the moment being devoutly ignored. The traditions of American life are strong enough, so far, to make intermarriage almost prohibitive in the thirty-one states where white and coloured do go to the same schools. But in the South, the Negro is woven deep into the texture of southern society. And it is in the South that the test will come of whether the white man can live and work with the black man as an equal—a social and political equal—and create a new kind of twentieth-century society which is purged of very old and very powerful tensions. The attempt to make it work will surely give tremendous pause to the racial propaganda that is raging all over Asia. And if it works, 1954 will be a date in human history as momentous as the year of the Magna Carta—*Home Service*

The Case of Dr. Oppenheimer

IN A TALK in the B.B.C.'s European Service, MAURICE LATEY said: 'Dr. Oppenheimer directed the making of the atomic bomb and was later chief adviser to the United States Atomic Energy Commission—until he was suspended last December. In 1947, when he was investigated on certain security charges, he was given a clean bill, but last year the President ordered his suspension from receiving secret information, and to older charges—of having associated with communists and having employed them on the atomic bomb project at Los Alamos—was added a charge of having delayed the manufacture of the hydrogen bomb both by advising against it and, when the Government had decided on it, by discouraging other scientists from working on it. These charges have now been thoroughly investigated by a special board of three men who could not by any stretch of imagination be described as witch-hunters. They have obviously given Dr. Oppenheimer the fairest of hearings and have only delivered their verdict after conscientious heart-searching. Nevertheless that verdict is bound to be deeply disturbing to opinion on both sides of the Atlantic.

'Dr. Oppenheimer is found to have been both loyal and discreet in the sense that he has not divulged any secret information, but the Board has voted by two to one not to reinstate him as a government adviser, because he has associations which are dangerous to security and is apt to be influenced by them and because his conduct in the hydrogen bomb programme was disturbing. The Commissioner who disagreed with the verdict denies that Dr. Oppenheimer hindered the development of the hydrogen bomb and points out that he is clearly a great deal less naive in his attitude to communists now than he was in 1947 when he was declared to be a good security risk. In other words, the criteria of security have changed since then and considerations of security are being given far greater weight compared with other considerations. Is this right in principle or is it expedient in the national interest? The Atomic Energy Commission will have to decide on this question when it considers Dr. Oppenheimer's appeal.

'It is a decision which vitally affects scientists. *The Times* asks: "Can science, and indeed other skills, where they touch the safety of nations, be served only by the equivalent of Soviet man, disciplined, doctrinaire, devoted narrowly to a single goal of power?" In a totalitarian system the scientist has no alternative, but in a democracy he may choose just not to serve the Government and to do just as well for himself, if not better, elsewhere. A right-wing American newspaper points out that if similar criteria of security had been applied in the nineteen-forties the atom bomb might not have been made.

'It is an observed fact that many scientists are politically naive and find an appeal in the simple answers that communism claims to give. That is the problem with Dr. Oppenheimer and many other scientists less brilliant than he. But it is a problem that could certainly be solved in the spirit of President Eisenhower's words the other day: "Here in America we are descended in blood and spirit from revolutionaries and rebels—men and women who dared to dissent from accepted doctrines. As their heirs, may we never confuse honest dissent with disloyal subversion".'

The Listener

All communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.1. The articles in THE LISTENER consist mainly of the scripts (in whole or part) of broadcast talks. Original contributions are not invited, with the exception of poems and short stories up to 3,000 words, which should be accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. The reproductions of talks do not necessarily correspond verbatim with the broadcast scripts. Yearly subscription rate (including postage): £1 4s. sterling. Shorter periods pro rata. Subscriptions should be sent to B.B.C. Publications, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1, or to usual agents.

Fruitful Thoughts

MR. EDWARD HYAMS, who is a prolific writer as well as a practical fruit grower, gives us some entertaining facts about the history of fruit in a broadcast talk which is printed on another page. Many of the fruits with which we are familiar, at any rate in times of plenty, were introduced into western Europe from the east: indeed they were a major contribution to civilisation offered by the returning Crusaders in the early Middle Ages (when they also brought home some notable diseases). But one is made to reflect that in the cultivation of such fruits modern man has devoted, and is devoting, as much labour and ingenuity as is applied to the more specifically industrial arts. Town dwellers sometimes tend to assume that whereas the processes of manufacture—whether of departmental minutes or motor-cars—require the most elaborate training, technical knowledge, and high pay, almost anybody with a little capital to invest and leisure to spare can set up as a market gardener and derive prosperity from the bountiful hands of nature. Yet when one reads about the methods employed in these days to defeat the vagaries of the weather—such as lighting fires in the middle of the night when a frost warning rouses farmers from their beds, or the employment of masses of cloches in order to catch and magnify the scanty rays vouchsafed by the sun in an English summer—one realises that earning a living from cultivating fruit or vegetables is far more complicated than pushing in plants and scratching round them with a hoe.

Moreover, even the simplest townee can notice the problem of the glut. It is a disconsolate fact for the professional grower that many apples and pears are likely to ripen at the same time so that they scarcely pay for the transport to carry them to market. (More profit could be made out of a silver nutmeg and a golden pear out of season.) Yet at times when the consumer hungers for fruit, owing to some peculiarity in the climate nobody's orchards will produce a satisfactory yield. A campaign might even be launched urging people to eat more fruit when a cruel frost or lack of sun or rain will mean that there is not enough fruit to sell at a reasonable price.

If these are some of the problems of the market gardener, how much more trying are those of the amateur gardener who cannot afford either the time or the implements to battle with the English climate. Take the strawberry, for example. As Mr. Hyams points out, the strawberry is a comparative newcomer to our land. The wild strawberry adequately covered with whipped cream is a pleasant enough dish; but how much more delightful is the cultivated strawberry, queen of the soft fruits. Yet the history of the strawberry in modern times has been punctuated with disaster. Some varieties, popular in the reign of Queen Victoria, have virtually disappeared owing to the ravages of virus. At one time the popular Royal Sovereign was threatened with extinction, and more recently the Auchincruive Climax, a hardy strain, has developed a mysterious and worrying complaint. If virus is kept under by constant attention, one still has to guard against the assault of birds from above or slugs from beneath. Cover the strawberries with netting and one has the heart-rending experience of having to disentangle birds caught in it; surround the strawberries with straw and the slugs seem to pop up and nestle in it. Buy patent mats and coverings and every strawberry that is grown is likely to cost half a crown. Indeed the fruits of nature rarely drop into one's lap, and when we eat them, we should do well to remember the struggles and heart-burnings of the skilled cultivators who grow them for us.

What They Are Saying

Communist broadcasts on E.D.C.

LAST WEEK there was nothing particularly new in commentaries on the Geneva Conference. Meanwhile, communist broadcasts stepped up their campaign calling for the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction and the abandonment of E.D.C.—both subjects of resolutions adopted by the meeting of the World Peace Council in Berlin. On Whit Sunday, east Berlin was the scene of a mass rally of 500,000 young people from east Germany, dedicated to 'Peace, Unity, and Freedom', and also to 'a fighting demonstration of youth against E.D.C.'. The opening ceremony was to have been performed by President Pieck, but, without any explanation being given, his place was taken by the Deputy Prime Minister, Herr Ulbricht, who, in his broadcast speech, inveighed against E.D.C. A 'Russian Hour' broadcast from Vienna on the majority vote of the French Socialist Party Congress in favour of E.D.C., stated that 'this weak majority' had been the result of weeks of work by 'the U.S. clique in the French Socialist Party'. Moreover, it in no way ensured approval of the E.D.C. treaties by the French National Assembly.

As regards the communist campaign calling for the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction, a Moscow broadcast quoted *Pravda* on the day following President Eisenhower's speech, when he said, *inter alia*, that the attempts to obtain Soviet co-operation in his plan for a world atomic energy pool had not produced the result he sought, and that the ruthless attitude of the Soviet bloc had thwarted the efforts of the free world for peace and a rebirth of truth among nations. Without referring directly to the President's speech, *Pravda* blamed the American press for distorting the facts about the breakdown of the discussions on international control of atomic energy:

Millions of people in all countries will remember the consistent struggle on the part of the Soviet Union for the prohibition of atomic weapons. . . . The peoples of the world also remember that it is the United States which has always opposed and continues to oppose the prohibition of atomic weapons. . . . The conduct of the United States press which brazenly distorts the clear-cut and precise position of the Soviet Union on the question of atomic energy, exposes the aggressive circles of the United States, not only as opponents of solving this vitally important problem, but also as the enemies of reducing international tension.

Subsequently, *Tass* briefly reported President Eisenhower's speech, commenting that he had sought to put the blame on the Soviet Union for the failure to settle outstanding international questions. He had 'repeated his usual utterances on the notorious communist threat and urged a struggle against communism'. According to Bratislava radio in Czechoslovakia, while President Eisenhower had complained of the lack of results from the U.S.-Soviet atomic talks, he had omitted to mention the reason, which was that 'the United States has deliberately sabotaged the negotiations by rejecting proposals for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons'.

In the course of the communist campaign for the prohibition of hydrogen and atomic weapons, the press and radio behind the Iron Curtain has publicised recent statements by church leaders in the west on the horrors of these weapons. Similarly, statements by church leaders behind the Iron Curtain have been publicised in broadcasts directed to the free world. In this connection it is interesting that Soviet transmissions in English and other foreign languages publicised the recent funeral of the Armenian Patriarch, and the statement at the funeral by Bishop Dimitrii of the Georgian Orthodox Church. The Bishop said:

The main task of the Soviet Government is not only the safeguarding of the material welfare of the people, but also the propagation all over the world of the high Christian moral principles of peace, unity, love and brotherhood. . . . With a special feeling of patriotic pride it must be stated that the highest task, a sacred task defined by Jesus Christ Himself, is to be fulfilled by the beloved fatherland, which has from time immemorial been called Holy Russia.

This statement, identifying Soviet communism with Christianity and suggesting that the Soviet Government is carrying on the traditions of 'Holy Russia', was given neither on the local Soviet Armenian service nor in any other Soviet home transmission. Instead, the press and radio for Soviet home consumption continues to inveigh against Christianity and all other religions and to emphasise the necessity of stepping-up atheistic propaganda in order to counter religion among the 'backward' Soviet people.

Did You Hear That?

THE PRICE OF SOBRIETY

'DURING THE PAST six months', said PAUL BAREAU in a European Service talk, 'a standard brand of coffee has risen in price from about 4s. 6d. to 7s. a pound. At the London auctions common tea, which was a little over 3s. a pound six months ago, is now well over 4s. a pound. Most fantastic of all has been the behaviour in the price of cocoa which, in its raw state, has gone up during this period from £300 to about £500 a ton.'

If this were an indication that the world is turning to the more sober drinks and is leaving alcohol behind, it would be a signal for the teetotallers to cheer. But before the cheer goes up let us pause and think. If the rise in the prices of these beverages is due to other causes, this is a phenomenon which may yet cause the temperance people more sorrow than joy. As things are, we shall soon be reaching the point at which it will be cheaper to down half a pint of beer than a mug of good strong tea; when we shall be flocking from the coffee to the public houses in pursuit of economy.

The rise in the price of coffee, which became so pronounced towards the end of last year and has continued this year, has been due largely to a poor crop in the main producing country, Brazil. In the crop year 1952-53 a substantial part of Brazil's acreage of coffee was caught by a very late and ferocious frost. The reduction in the amount of coffee available for sale took place at a time when in a number of countries the consumption of coffee began to go up by leaps and bounds. This was particularly true of Germany and other parts of central Europe which for the long war years and the immediate post-war period subsisted on ersatz coffee. They have recently been enjoying the luxury of going back to the genuine article. The result of this conjunction of lower supply and greater demand was a sharp rise in prices. The American public, which consumes more coffee than any other country, did not, however, see the phenomenon as a product of the free play of economic forces. Helped by the American press, it visualised the rise in the price of coffee as a result of dark speculative machinations. It felt itself to be the victim of highway robbery and many Americans decided to go on a buyers' strike against coffee and switched their allegiance to tea.

And so the rise in the price of coffee communicated itself to a competing article, tea. This transition, welcome though it is to the sterling countries which provide most of the world's tea, is in some way inexplicable to an Englishman who has visited the United States and has drunk what they call tea. The concoction, which they brew by dipping a little muslin bag containing tea leaves into a cup of tepid water, bears no resemblance to the honest cup of tea which is consumed in this country. Some months ago a party of British textile workers visited the United States. One of their first ports of call was Boston where they were received with what their hosts had been told would make them feel really at home—a nice cup of tea. A weaver, speaking with all the directness of Lancashire, told the young lady who had served him, "Miss, if this is t'mook you call tea, I'm not surprised you threw it all in the 'arbour!"

In the case of cocoa, the increase in the price is also the reflection of a free market in which demand has persistently outstripped supply for many months past. Supply has been curtailed because a comparatively new disease, swollen shoot, has stricken many areas of West Africa which produces the bulk of the world's supplies

of cocoa. Demand has grown for all kinds of reasons. The derationing of sweets in Britain has caused us to become the largest consumers of confectionery in the world. Increased demand for chocolate and cocoa inevitably accompanies a rise in the standard of living, which has been taking place over the greater part of the world. The supply of cocoa



Cane suspension bridge tied to trees on either side of the river: a photograph taken in Burma by Mr. Kingdon Ward

cannot make an immediate response to the attraction of high prices because it takes more than six years between the time a new cocoa tree is planted and that at which it begins to bear fruit'.

PLANT COLLECTING IN BURMA

After journeying for eight months in what is one of the remotest parts of North Burma, F. KINGDON WARD, plant collector and botanist, returned home recently with a store of treasures. Many of the 1,200 varieties of plants and flowers he collected were previously unknown and one of his most valuable finds was a lily which grows high up in the tallest trees and has a flower of a rare colour that is matched only by certain orchids. This Burmese journey was the twenty-first plant-collecting expedition Mr. Kingdon Ward has carried out, yet it was the most rewarding of all. He spoke about it in 'Radio Newsreel'.

'Among the best finds we made', he said, 'was a lily which grows high up in the tallest trees, the flower of a colour found only in certain orchids, and the only lily in the world known to grow in the tree tops. We found one of these plants in bud on a fallen tree and decided to search other big trees in the hope of finding more. The trees in this part of the world are so matted with creepers, orchids, small bushy plants, rhododendrons, and ferns that you cannot make out anything above ten or fifteen feet—not even the villagers who do the climbing for you. But, nevertheless, they managed to collect nearly two dozen bulbs for us—and incidentally even they, the local people, had never seen this remarkable flower before.'

'We started into the interior of Burma early last year. The last lap was up a twisting mountain road



Hkanung girl porters tying up loads which they carried for the plant-collecting expedition: another photograph taken by Mr. Kingdon Ward

towards an unnamed range of peaks and through endless forest. When we left mechanical transport behind it was often hard going. Our baggage was carried on the backs of porters, mostly women and girls of the local hill tribes, short, sturdy people, wearing cotton blouses and long skirts as a protection against leeches. They carried about fifty pounds and we had ninety loads. It took us eleven days to reach the last village below the high peaks. These villages consist of long, bamboo huts with grass roofs, floors raised on stilts, and the eaves coming right down to keep the rain out. Thus it was almost pitch dark inside. We had one built specially for us and for eight months we used it as our headquarters.

'The ridges up which we climbed were extraordinarily steep. Very often, we cut our way through bamboo and scrub with a precipice of 1,000 feet or so falling away to one side, although we could seldom see the bottom because of the mist. In summer the rain was relentless: usually what happened was that a heavy wet mist would come sweeping up from a valley like steam from a cauldron and when it reached the higher air down would come the rain, and before long we were saturated. Once the rainy season really set in we were almost cut off from the outside world. The only bridges across the rivers we had to ford were made of cane—a lattice of cane strung across the torrent and tied to trees on both banks, sometimes with the lattice so widely spaced you could easily fall through: to keep your balance you had to hold on with both hands.

'One of the loveliest plants we found was a begonia, a creeping begonia with a crimson flower. It seemed to be a very rare plant; at any rate, we found only two patches of it though we did collect any amount of seed. Above forest level, that is at about 11,000 feet, the ground was carpeted with dwarf rhododendrons, some ankle deep, others creeping over the rocks; and then there was a white nomocharis, a sort of alpine lily, and a primula with a big circular leaf which turned a vivid chrome yellow in winter.

'This is indeed a remote corner of the world. In the winter when it is clear and fine you could see 100 miles and more. On one brilliant day, standing on a ridge 11,000 feet above sea level, we looked across the ridge after ridge of mountains—a semi-circle of peaks leading right away into Tibet in the north, while to the west lay the glazed ranges of the Indian frontier, and to the east the snows of China'.

A SAD STORY

GEORGE VINE is a collector of epitaphs in graveyards. He spoke of his hobby in 'The Northcountryman'. 'At Heptonstall', he said, 'I found a stone, now alas in three pieces, which tells at length how a certain William Greenwood was forsaken by a bad wife and forced to serve under His Majesty in the Third York Militia for eight years. Further, he left a girl of sixteen to be cozened out of his money by her mother's father. His own father was deposed for a felony; and his own brother was arraigned before the magistrates for his raiment which he had bequeathed to him in the presence of witnesses. Small wonder that although William's age was but thirty-five years "he in his trouble dropped down and left this vale of tears".'

'Another old soldier's epitaph in Halifax churchyard relates that a certain John Logan spent thirty years as a soldier; was twice married and had eight children by his first wife and twenty-four by his second; lived in the reign of five kings, and died in December 1830 aged 105.

'At Kirby Malham are twin graves with a single stone whose plinth has a foot on each grave. The centre of the plinth is cut away in the shape of a bridge and a small stream is guided through it and between the graves. The story behind this one is that the husband, an

army officer, spent most of his married life overseas while his wife remained at home and so, having been separated by water in life they are now separated by water in death.

'In Oakworth churchyard I found an epitaph which must be unique. It reads: "Pray reader pause and drop a generous tear O'er her sad wrongs whose relics moulder here. Retiring, modest, thoughtful, and reserved, Of guile unconscious and from guilt preserved. Blameless and artless, with unsullied fame; The tongue of slander e'en had spared her name. At length when more than thirty years had passed A dark and murky cloud her sky o'ercast. The Spoiler came. Fair words were on his tongue. She gave her heart nor thought he meant her wrong. Guileless herself she thought him free from guile. Believed his promise, trusted in his smile. He gained his end, then cast her from his side. A child was born. She broke her heart and died".'

SELF-HELP ON BRITISH RAILWAYS

'A big locomotive shed at Willesden', said VALENTINE SELSEY, B.B.C. reporter, in 'The Eye-witness', 'is the home of an exhibition of rolling stock and equipment—the largest and most varied organised by British Railways and Transport since the war. It was staged to coincide with the International Railway Congress held in London.

'There is enough on view to please even the most severe critic. I have heard foreigners talk of Britain's backwardness in the development of diesel rail-cars. At Willesden I climbed on and off a diesel rail-car, powered by two common or garden motor-bus engines, soon to operate in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Two cars will go to make up one train and these light trains should help in the efforts now being made to make our branch lines pay. I next climbed on to a self-service buffet car. It has been estimated that it takes three times as long to serve a customer over the counter as to allow him to help himself. So



'The Duke of Gloucester'—the 'largest and heaviest steam engine built for British Railways since nationalisation'

Midland Region are adapting twenty-seven old ambulance vehicles into self-service buffet cars. The passenger walks along a counter where he helps himself to sandwiches, sweets, chocolate, or cream buns; he gets his tea or coffee or hot dish at another counter and then—carrying his own tray, and by way of the cashier's desk—he goes back to his compartment to eat his meal. Later this year, passengers from St. Pancras will notice these buffet cars on the railway.

'London Transport have made their contribution, too. Side by side, are two almost identical carriages. Both carry forty passengers seated, but there is a difference: the oldest model is of steel; the newest of aluminium. The first weighs thirty-seven tons, the second twenty-eight tons. The aluminium car costs about £1,000 more to build, but the experts say that within fifteen years it will have saved that amount in energy consumption alone. Locomotives are there in force. A diesel-electric engine for use on the Manchester-Sheffield main-line railway is an outstanding example; this powerful engine will travel by way of the Woodhead Tunnel, the longest tunnel built in this country since the war, and expected to be opened this summer. But the most powerful engine of all is a steam engine—the largest and heaviest built for British Railways since nationalisation: "The Duke of Gloucester".'

I was shown over the cab of this engine by one of our senior engine-drivers—Mr. W. O. Withis. He has been in the service for forty-seven years and has driven several royal trains. Sitting on his comfortable stool, he showed me how everything had been designed to make his job simpler. Not so the railway engines fifty years ago. I asked why human ingenuity had not thought of some automatic gadget which could take over the work of the fireman. Firing an engine, he said, was an expert job and could not be trusted to a machine'.

'The Reinhardt Touch'

By W. BRIDGES-ADAMS

SOMEbody once remarked, of the two great troublers of the world's peace who came to a bad end within recent memory, that, after all, they were only theatrical managers gone wrong. Maximilian Reinhardt was decidedly of the stuff of which dictators are made; but being also theatre-stuff he found in the theatre his natural field for self-expression. And in consequence it would be very hard to find that a single soul was the worse for his sojourn on this earth, while positively millions of people were the better for it.

When the great Reinhardt shows took London by storm in the years before the first war, he was already the emperor of the German stage. I did not meet him until after the war, when his Kaiser was a fugitive in Holland; but Reinhardt was now emperor of the Austrian stage as well, holding his state in Salzburg, in the palace of Leopoldskron; and at the moment of our meeting he was on his way to extend his dominion to the United States. Such are the glorious realities that may await a dictator who is content to operate strictly, faithfully, and with genius, in the realm of make-believe.

We met in the *Aquitania*, two days out from Southampton. My business in the States was to arrange for a tour of my Stratford company. But when I saw the name of Professor Reinhardt in the passenger list I there and then conceived the grandiose idea of inviting him to do a Shakespeare play at Stratford. At the worst, he could only say no. So I sent him a note. Next morning I found in my stateroom a card engraved with the name of Dr. Rudolf Kommer. While I, in my woeful ignorance of the great world, was wondering who Dr. Kommer might be, there came a rap at the door, and there was the doctor himself. With a blend of correctness and urbanity that was altogether charming, he made me a bow, and said that the Herr Professor would be in the lounge after luncheon: would it suit my convenience to be presented to the Herr Professor then? Good; he would do himself the honour of conducting me to the Herr Professor, and would call again at a quarter past two precisely.

The Georgian lounge of the *Aquitania*, with amber shafts of winter sunshine swaying gently to and fro, was a suitably scenic setting. With the exception of Dr. Kommer and a valet, Reinhardt's personal

bodyguard and headquarters staff were already in New York; but an eminent American financier was in attendance, and acted as interpreter. Even in its culmination the parade ran astonishingly true to type, for the man on whom I now set eyes seemed, at the first glance, to be rather less impressive than his surroundings.

He was of mixed race and, I believe, of fairly humble Viennese origin; his ten years' rise to fame as an actor had been at the Deutsches Theater, under Otto Brahm. There was a kind of nobility about him, but it owed little to his stature or his features. He was stocky, square-headed; an irregular chubby face, an irregular fleshy nose; thickish lips that were humorous and kindly when he smiled; a broad, low brow; his eyes were soft, and luminous, and beautiful. Just now, after lunch, he was as drowsy as a well-fed lion at the zoo, and he blinked at me through a blue haze of cigar smoke. But that was in fact how people used to see him at rehearsal, watching peacefully from his stall until things went wrong, and then quietly putting them right with as few words as possible.

I have to confess that, as far as my great project was concerned, the meeting got no further than what the diplomatists call an exchange of views. It was not until years later that the main clauses of the treaty, so to speak, were drawn up, after a sumptuous dinner, in the library of Leopoldskron. Even then, illness intervened and Reinhardt, who had explored the Stratford stage from flies to cellar and liked it, and had seen the company and liked them, never produced at Stratford. Perhaps it was as well for our finances that he did not; but it

would have been greatly to our glory if he had.

One thing, however, I brought away from this early encounter, and that was a very strong sense of the value of an *entourage*. I could not help wondering whether I might not have carried matters a little further if I had had with me a plump and dapper Dr. Kommer, not to mention a valet and a New York banker; if I had been in a position to suggest that Reinhardt's people and my people should get together for discussions at a lower level. For it is a fact that in the theatre, as in life generally, it is of no use setting up as a Sultan unless you have a Grand Vizier and a number of lesser functionaries round the throne. A unique actor-manager like Irving, whose greatest creation was himself, had little



Max Reinhardt—'a dictator who was content to operate in the realm of make-believe'



Scene from Max Reinhardt's production of 'Oedipus Rex' at Covent Garden, January 1912: Oedipus listening to the suppliant before his palace at Thebes

Mander-Mitchenson Theatre Collection

need of this auxiliary display, although he had a highly efficient Grand Vizier in Bram Stoker. But Reinhardt, as a producer, lived remote from the public gaze; he had very much this need. During his great English vogue I heard a man say that no doubt Reinhardt was a fine artist, and all that; what *he* could not stand was the Galloping Barons. This was putting it too high, although I believe there were younger sons of noble family who were proud to serve him as honorary *attachés*. But it is true that when Reinhardt put on 'Oedipus' for Martin Harvey some of Harvey's people were rather awe-struck by the discovery that, as they put it, every blinking scene-painter was a professor and every blinking electrician a doctor.

And there were tremendous goings-on, as you can imagine, when Morris Gest, his American impresario, who had very much the same notions about doing things in style, came over to arrange for the New York production of 'The Miracle'. There were Gest and his suite at the hotel, and Reinhardt and his suite at Leopoldskron; and the limousines rushed hither and thither, astonishing the Salzburger, until a day came when both cohorts were waiting silently at the palace, while the two great chiefs paced up and down the terrace in the rain. A little like Hitler's Berchtesgaden, you may think? Why, yes; only, as I have said, Reinhardt was a dictator who did no harm.

Moreover, I do not think he had much use for yes-men and sycophants. The men about him—authors, designers, actors above all—were formidable people, who invited the control of his strong hand because they were strong themselves. And, indeed, if one had to say in one word what Reinhardt's main contribution to our theatre was, that word would have to be 'strength'. The English acting of the time was notable for its sincerity and delicacy. Suddenly Reinhardt thundered at us that in the theatre, before you can be effectively sincere or delicate, you must be strong. As a consequence, he was sometimes accused of coarseness, of vulgarity; and you had only to look at that face to know that not all the fire in him was divine. He was so greedy for life in all its aspects and such a master of the direct assault on heart and nerves, that there was nothing he was afraid to touch, provided he saw beauty at the end.

The shows he brought to England were in the category that the Germans call *kolossal*. Yet in his own strong way he could be as delicate as he pleased. His genius was as universal as his taste for life, and he was as much in his element with a handful of polished comedians in the Kammerspiel as when he was imparting a baroque twist to Offenbach or Shakespeare in the Redoutensaal in Vienna, or working up a thousand supposed Thebans into a Nordic-Semitic frenzy in the great circus in Berlin.

So, you see, there was no such thing as a regular Reinhardt style. He was at one with Gordon Craig in proclaiming the theatre an all-embracing art, to which actors, authors, musicians, designers, and craftsmen had their various contributions to make. But he went much further than Craig ever did in practice. In his approach to any play, he seemed to know instinctively how he, being the kind of man he was, could best make it live. And to that end he did not hesitate to draw on any period, any school of acting or design, any spirit or mood of any age, that suited him; or, for that matter, any mode of presentation, whether he held his action compactly in the proscenium frame, or sent it hurtling down the stalls gangway or surging over a huge arena. He was what is called an eclectic; and, apart from that strength I have spoken of, the distinguishing mark of a Reinhardt show was the unfailing rightness of his choice.

In Salzburg Cathedral Square

He never broke through the trammels of convention to greater effect than when he expanded his earlier production of 'Everyman' to fill the cathedral square of Salzburg—where you can see it to this day. He staged the ancient morality in the manner of the medieval mysteries, against the west front of the cathedral. I must say at once that von Hoffmannsthal's version has not the harsh austerity of the original; it is less troubling to the spirit and draws tears more easily—on a 'Jedermann' afternoon you might meet hard-boiled men coming away from the square in a very reduced state indeed. But the unforgettable crisis of the play as old William Poel did it was when Everyman brought the lash down on his own shoulders in an access of self-loathing, and the spirit of his Good Deeds sprang to life.

I still remember the lovely serenity of Hélène Thimig in the German equivalent of that part; but Poel was Poel and Reinhardt was Reinhardt; and to me the memorable moments of 'Jedermann' were of remarkably diverse character. One was—would you believe it?—the

passing of an improper joke, in whispers, down a supper-table that was perhaps 100 feet long; I can still see it passing, like the wind over the wheat, in a ripple of splutters and guffaws. In that other-worldly play, was it not perfect Reinhardt to give this pleasant world its due? Another moment was when the voice of God called 'Jedermann!' from the depths of the cathedral, and from the roof-tops, and finally from the mountain above the town. That was before the days of the loudspeaker that we know, and it was entirely characteristic of Reinhardt to plant an actor with an immense megaphone halfway up the mountain, to take a single cue.

The Small Part

The Reinhardt touch: let me try to think of a few more examples. Would you like to see, say, a dozen small-part actors of the Deutsches Theater impersonating Blucher's staff at Waterloo, each one of them not only right to the last button of his uniform and looking like the man as he had lived, but also bearing himself with the pride and authority of a great military caste? That was in 'Niedhart von Gneissnau'. Or a little, old, cloth merchant in a Persian bazaar, flicking over all the hangings in his shop to show their bright side until the scene was flaming with colour, when the action, and the music, changed from grave to gay? That was in 'Sumurun', an Arabian Night. Or a perfectly impeccable Old Etonian, tie and all, who astonishingly contrived to speak his German lines in an Old Etonian voice? That was in a translation of an English comedy. Or a knight in shining armour on a great white percheron, framed in a vast church doorway and falling in love at fifty paces? That was in 'The Miracle'. Or a ring of nightmare torches round the face of a scared herdsman, who has a dreadful tale to tell, under the scrutiny of 400 pairs of eyes? That was in 'Oedipus'.

I have affectionate memories of his 'Venetian Night'. It was his one failure in London; I fancy because our authorities insisted on his bowdlerising the later scenes. It was a mime play. He chose not the Venice of the Magnificos or of Casanova, but the Venice of the Victorian Grand Tour, with a good deal of help from Mendelssohn. Imagine, then, a small piazza, backed by a hotel and encircled on your left by a shadowy canal with a bridge across it. On the bridge there appears a flaxen-haired German student, complete with his rucksack and his Goethe, taking in the Venice of his dreams and dutifully reading what the revered Goethe has to say about it. Under the bridge shoots a gondola, bearing an English milord and his lady with an incredible amount of baggage. The milord is old and dry; the lady is young, beautiful, and unhappy. The spectacle is too much for an Austrian lieutenant of cavalry on the opposite bank of the canal; he catches her eye. She throws him a rose, but it drops short, on the open page of the student's Goethe; he is transfigured—but he has noted the lieutenant. The stage now revolves until we are inside the hotel, with its staircase, galleries, and corridors. The ill-matched couple are shown obsequiously to their rooms, the student, less obsequiously, to his attic under the tiles. In his white nightgown, he says his prayers and goes to sleep, with his Goethe and the rose upon his pillow.

I forget how it came to pass—in his dream—that the student made his way to the lady's room, the stage turning to help him. But in the room he found the lieutenant, up to no good. He slew him; and I remember the ashen horror on Maria Carmi's face (I think it was Maria Carmi) as she swept the bed-curtains round the body. But it was impossible to leave it there, so the poor student manfully took the thing on his back, and there ensued a hideous tiptoeing through the dim corridors—the stage still moving—and down the stairs and out on to the bridge, where he flung it into the water. Instantly the bells in the hotel began jangling, and the porter ran out, and plunged his arms into the canal, and fished out not one dead lieutenant but six of him in quick succession. He tossed them high in the air and they landed on their toes, bouncing and quite dead. Still bouncing, they chased the student through the labyrinth of the hotel and out again on to the bridge, where, with a wild gesture, he threw himself over. But at that moment his bed came floating down the canal, and he dropped into it, fast asleep. End of Part I. In a time when you were beginning to hear it said that scenery was a menace to true illusion, it was refreshing to find a man who could pile a few tons of it on the stage and set it twirling, merely to spin a thread of gossamer. He used the same device to more serious purpose in Shakespeare's histories; but Reinhardt's Shakespearians were much too strong to be afraid of scenery.

His undoubted masterpiece was 'The Miracle'. What his religious

beliefs were, I do not know. But his burning faith in the theatre as the expression of everything in life and beyond it was enough to account for the fact that 'The Miracle', long before it reached New York, had made its way across Europe in seventeen distinct productions. It is pleasant to think that, in a sense, the begetter of it was our own Charles Cochran, who in 1911 incited Reinhardt to create a wordless play that would fill Olympia. And it is that first production that I most like to remember.

Olympia was arranged very much as it is, or used to be, for the Horse Show; and indeed you were met by a whiff of stables, mingling with the fumes of incense, when you went in, and you made your way to your seat past the stage properties: the whole paraphernalia of medieval life, faith, and war. In this odd fashion Reinhardt was beginning to work on your imagination even before you reached your seat. In it, you found that he had given you nothing more than a few broad hints that you were in a Gothic cathedral; there were some rudimentary stained-glass windows, and one end of the arena was blocked by a west wall with two gigantic doors; you could not yet see the bare hillside, with a single tree, that lay beyond them. High above the tiers was the organ loft, and Humperdinck's orchestra. Still higher, above the arena, there were hanging structures rather like signal-boxes, housing the electricians and the fierce arc-lamps with which they were going to light the show.

I will not attempt a full description of 'The Miracle'. The story is the old one of the errant nun who ranged the world for seven years while the Madonna took her place and performed her duties. Reinhardt being Reinhardt, it was to be expected that the errantry of the nun, and its spectacular consequences, would take up a good deal of the action. But that action would be cheap and purposeless unless it proceeded against a background of belief. He was a master, and a profound admirer, of church ceremonial, but that was not enough. In a London playgoing public that was more Protestant than Catholic and perhaps more coolly indifferent than either, he must, for the direction of the show, establish faith. Well, a miracle is an act that creates faith, and so he resolved on an introductory miracle, just to make us all believe; he resolved on a miraculous healing.

Whether it takes 1,000 people or 2,000 to fill the arena of Olympia I cannot say, but it was filled: pattering nuns and priests; peasants, townspeople, and children flooding in through the great doors; the Archbishop and his train, acolytes, pilgrims, men-at-arms—how banal this might have been, and was not, because of the quality of mind behind it all—and hordes of unwashed sinners, and the lame and the sick and the blind; the air steaming with incense and resonant with a perpetually rising babble of devotion. A stretcher party came shuffling through the crowd and laid a motionless cripple before the steps of



From Reinhardt's production of 'Everyman' in the open air at the Mozart Festival in Salzburg, August 1926

Mander-Mitchenson Theatre Collection

expanding and expanding with outspread hands rising and rising in the primeval gesture of worship. And again, the wonderful *slowness* of it all. Those of us who remember it will remember to the end of our days how it feels to behold a miracle.

The end of Reinhardt's days was clouded by events that few of us foresaw. Leopoldskron was built by an eighteenth-century bishop who was an uncompromising persecutor of stage people and Jewish people, and Reinhardt may have felt an ironic satisfaction in making the place his home. But a government came to power that shared at least one of the bishop's prejudices, and he had to leave first Germany and then Austria. During his tenure he had made that baroque palace as much a part of the theatre as he was himself, and one would like to think that in saying goodbye to it he felt only as if he were clapping his hands and telling his incomparable staff to strike it and put it in store; but I doubt that. As a displaced person of international fame, where was he to go? The French welcomed him, and reminded him in courtly language how, through the first war, he had kept Molière in the bill at the Deutsches, just as he had kept Shakespeare. But it was inevitable that he should gravitate to Hollywood, in the hope of doing for the big film what he had done for the big show: reluctantly, perhaps, for his heart was with the living stage. The hope was not fulfilled for very long. When I last heard from him, shortly before his death in 1943, he was, I think, teaching young people to act. Frau Reinhardt—Hélène Thimig—was with him. It was better than eating one's heart out, alone, on an island in the Atlantic.

—Third Programme



'The great doors of the cathedral are closed': scene from 'The Miracle', in the Max Reinhardt production at Olympia, December 1911

B. O. Hoppé

The latest pamphlets in the Fantasy Poets series (Numbers 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22) are by Arthur Boyars, Donald Davie, Jonathan Price, Philip Larkin and Kingsley Amis respectively (Fantasy Press, 9d. each). They are not representative of a school or even of a generation but they have some things in common—they are highly intelligent, metaphysical in style, and show a preference for an unusual subject or viewpoint. Like *Oxford Poetry, 1953* (from the same enterprising publisher) they demonstrate very well the direction which most of the best young poets now seem to be taking. Mr. Davie and Mr. Amis already have reputations in other literary fields, and their booklets will be generally welcomed: Mr. Boyars and Mr. Larkin have been publishing verse for several years, though this selection seems a marked advance on their previous work: Mr. Price, in many ways the most interesting of the quintet, was born in 1931. The short pamphlet is not perhaps a very attractive medium for poetry, but the excellent standard of these five must outweigh the disadvantages of their form: they are also cheap and well-printed.

The Fruits of Our Orchards and Gardens

EDWARD HYAMS on their history and long journeys

ALTHOUGH there is a good case to be made for the theory that fruit trees and plants were the first plants to be cultivated by man—for example, the date-palm in Mesopotamia—most of our fruits are, relatively, new-comers in the west. Not that we owe all our fruits to the east: there has been some reciprocity; if we had the grape from the orient, the orient had the apple from us.

Man and the Grape-Vine

The history of the association between man and the grape-vine is so ancient that it begins, in fact, well before history. The origin of the cultivation can be arrived at somewhat as follows: the vine cannot be cultivated by a nomadic people, but only by a settled community. But wine can be made from wild grapes—would, in fact, make itself if grapes were stored, bruised by handling, in open vessels. It is probable that wine-making was earlier than viticulture. If, somewhere within the ancient habitat of the wild vine, or near it, there was a settled community of farmers, they would soon have taken the obvious step of bringing the vine, source of wine, into cultivation. It happens that the vine was not native to the Nile valley nor to the plain between the Tigris and Euphrates. But it was extremely common, and still is, to the north-west of Mesopotamia, in the catchment area of the two rivers. The wild vine could not possibly grow in the climate of Mesopotamia but the cultivated vine could be managed there, given irrigation. The earliest system of ideograms found at Kish includes a vine-leaf among the figures. The vine and wine figure largely in the Gilgamesh Epos. In short, it is very probable that the first cultivators of the vine were the ancient Chaldeans of one of the Mesopotamian city cultures, and that the vine was first domesticated 5,000 or 6,000 years ago, or even more. There is some evidence that it was from the first a sacred plant, a temple prerogative, cultivated on top of the *ziggurats*.

Trading between the two great protocivilisations was established at a very early date, and the country between Egypt and Mesopotamia was early civilised by both peoples. Byblos was an Egyptian colony, and no doubt all Phoenicia came under the influence of successive Mesopotamian empires. There, at all events, the vine would have been happier than in Mesopotamia itself; and there, in fact, it did flourish. The Egyptians probably had the vine, then, from Asia Minor. They, too, cultivated it in vineyards associated with the temples—the vineyards have such names as Blessed-be-Horus-first-of-heaven—and from Egypt the vine would have spread to colonial territories, such as Crete.

It is possible that we have an echo of the arrival of the vine in Greece, in the 'Bacchae' of Euripides. It is fairly safe to say that if we follow the early movement of the cult of Dionysus, we shall also be following the route taken by the cultivated vine on its journey into Europe. Dionysus was known to the Greeks as a Thracian god; he came to Thrace, however, from Lydia. Although, then, the Greeks might have had wine and vine from Crete, it seems more likely that they had them from the source, by way of Lydia. Meanwhile, the founders of Carthage would have taken the vine to Africa from Phoenicia, so that either the Greeks or the Carthaginians could have taken viticulture to Italy. Certainly it was not native there: we find Romulus pouring libations not of wine but of milk. But by Pliny's time wine-growing was a very ancient and important Italian industry, and had spread into southern Gaul. It continued to spread, and in Domitian's reign was taking up so much land that the cultivation of staple crops was threatened: a decree was promulgated forbidding further plantation, and even ordering that vineyards beyond Italy be grubbed. Probus, in 280, reversed that decree, and it was some time after this that vines were first planted in England—or so I believe, although Professor Dion, of the Collège de France, has shown that the northward movement of the vine through France was rather slow, and there is no evidence for the plantation of the great Bordeaux or Alsace vineyards before the fourth century.

The case of the apple is very different: *Pyrus malus*, the wild apple, is native to the Near East and many parts of Europe, but can never have been native to those sub-tropical regions in which agriculture first

began. Yet the use of the apple is immensely ancient in European economy—more ancient than metals, for example. A sufficient number of carbonised specimens of dried apple segments were found, nearly a century ago, in such Lake Dwelling sites as those of Switzerland and northern Italy, to make it certain that dried apples were stored for winter use. De Candolle, in his *Origin of Cultivated Plants*, suggested that these stores were so great that they cannot have been the result of gathering wild fruit. The implication is that pre-Bronze Age Europeans planted orchards. At all events it is certain that our own apples, some of them no bigger than these primitive ones, others eight or ten times the size, derive from three or four native European species. There is linguistic confirmation for this. European Aryan languages all have a word with the root 'ap', 'ab', 'av', or something similar, for apple, excepting Latin—and its near derivatives. But Sanscrit has no word for apple, the Indian word being a Persian loan word. The Greek *malon*, Latin *malus*, is probably not Aryan-Greek but perhaps Pelasgian. The Basques, another pre-Aryan-speaking people, have yet a different word. It comes to this, that the proto-Indo-European-speaking people did not know the apple; that the western branch of the family found it in Europe when they arrived, learned to cultivate it, and sent it east *via Persia*.

The case of the pear falls between these other two. Some of our pears are of European stock. A few pears are found in the Lake Dwelling stores. But we also grow pears which derive from *Pyrus nivalis*, a near Asiatic species.

There are three principal ways of producing fruit plants with qualities superior to the species: mere cultivation and pruning will, by providing optimum conditions, enable the plant to do its best; then, the transplanting of species into gardens means that any valuable mutations will be observed, and propagated, whereas in the wild they may be lost. Finally, the bringing into close association, by man, of species which, while belonging to one genus, are, in nature, geographically remote from each other, entails cross-fertilisations, and thus hybrids which may transcend the parent plants in many respects.

Our modern strawberries are a case in point. None of the ancients anywhere cultivated strawberries although several species are native throughout the temperate zones. In the fourteenth century *Fragaria vesca*, and possibly one other species, were brought into gardens in France and Italy, and later England, and improved to the limit by cultivation and selection. No further advance was made until much later, when *Fragaria Virginiana* was brought from North America. No crossing was done, or, if it was tried, it failed. But late in the eighteenth century a really large-fruited species was brought from South America—*Fragaria Chiloensis*. The French botanist, Duchesne, crossed it with the Virginian strawberry. His work was interrupted by the Revolution, was taken up in England, and soon the first of the series of large-fruited modern strawberries appeared. Still later, about 1850, a success—French this time—in crossing a *Virginiana-Chiloensis* hybrid with one of the European species gave rise to the perpetual-fruited, large-berried plants which provide fruit as copiously in September, October, and November as in June.

Peaches and Melons from Iran

Peaches, apricots, and melons were all unknown to the Greeks until late in their career, for neither Hesiod nor Homer had heard of them. Peaches and melons can be traced by nomenclature to an Iranian source, whence they spread first east to China, later west to the Hellenistic world, not reaching England until late in the Middle Ages. The very sweet and fragrant honey-melons may just possibly be a European product: Pliny has an account of a cucumber plant which, surprisingly, bore a gourd which turned golden yellow when ripe and was very sugary and scented. This is, conceivably, an account of a bud mutation. But it is rather doubtful; hundreds of varieties of sweet and water melons were of great economic importance in south-west Asia, and it was no doubt from there that the Romans and Greeks had their plants, although the water melons have a different history: the Persians called them *hindebane*, which probably means that they came from India.

The Tartars had the fruit from the Persians, and it reached Italy bearing the Byzantine Greek name of *anguria*. Its cultivation in Europe is thus some centuries later than honey-melons.

The case of the apricot is particularly interesting. It was originally, and very anciently, cultivated in China, whence it drifted west into Iran and Armenia. The earliest literary reference to the fruit is in the *Shan-hai king*, dated about 2205 B.C. The wild fruit is about an inch and a quarter in diameter, and sour; cultivation and selection transformed it, until the Chinese apricots were two and a half inches in diameter, and sweet. Evidently the Europeans had this tree from Armenia, for its earliest European name was *Mailon armeniaca*. Pliny says it was introduced to Europe in his own lifetime, but it did not spread beyond Italy, as far as I can discover, until very much later. Because of its extreme earliness the Graeco-Romans called the fruit *praekokkia*. The name, variously mangled, was adopted by numerous peoples within Hellenistic cultural influence: it was latinised as *praecoqua*, and under that name the Arabs had the tree from the eastern Romans. In their mouths the word became *barqûq*, prefixed by the article *al*, hence *albarqûq*. Planting the trees in their south-European empire, the Arabs brought their own name for it to Europe, and both the tree and the name then spread northward . . . through Italy as *albercocco* and Spain as *alberiquoque*; through France as *abricot*, and so, in late medieval times, to Germany, *aprikose*, and England, apricot. Meanwhile, evidence of the tree's pre-Arab introduction into Italy still remains: in parts of that country the fruit is still called *meliaca*, a corrupt version of the ancient *armeniaca*.

Although plums are native to Britain, as sloes and bullaces, our cultivated plums were introduced from the orient, and that rather late. First, there is the group of small plums called *mirabelles*, of great importance in central Europe. The word *mirabelle* is a Gallicisation of *myrobalan*, by which the tree is still known to English nurserymen. It is an Indian word—*myrobalanos*. The cultivated plant came from northern India to Persia, thence to Syria, and into Europe by way of Thrace. It quickly escaped from gardens and went wild, until whole forests of it were to be found in central Europe. The copious supply of these plums gave rise to their use for making wines and spirits—*slivovitz* and *raki*. Their use for this purpose is of ancient Persian origin.

The fine dessert plums first appear in our literature in Vergil, Horace, and Ovid. The first trees actually reached Italy from the east not long before Cato's time. In Pliny's time the best plums were called *Damascene*, an indication of their source. We still have the word here in the corruption of *damson*. The Greek wild plum was called *proumnon*, hence the Latin *prunus*, but the new Oriental plums seem to have been called *kokky-melon*. *Kokky* is the extreme corruption of *praekokkia*, so that the word thus returned, mutilated, to the Greeks, tacked on to the wrong fruit.

All our cultivated nuts, even those which resemble the native hazel, are also of west Asian origin. The ancient western world had no specific names for nuts: filberts, almonds, walnuts, and chestnuts were all imported by the Greeks and Romans, and the latter confused them all in the single name of 'Pontic nuts'. Later, each kind of nut received a specific place name, indicating its source: the places in question were all associated with Sardes, in Lydia, with Mount Ida, or with Sinope

and Heraklia. The actual beginning of cultivation was postponed until surprisingly late.

In the second century B.C. the poet Nicander wrote of the nuts of *Kastanis*; no scholar has been able to identify the place, but the name may have given rise to *castanaea*, the Latin for chestnuts. On the other hand, Theophrastus derived the name from *Kasthanaea* in Magnesia, where the nuts were grown. Chestnuts were not cultivated in Italy in Cato's time but they had been introduced by Pliny's time. By the fifteenth century the tree was well established in many parts of western Europe, was becoming a staple diet in some, and had been planted in England. The French gallicised the Latin name as *chataigne*, which was anglicised as *chasteynes*, and corrupted to *chestnuts*.

The walnut was evidently the most valued among the Latins, since they called it *Jovi-glans*, God's acorn—although the Greeks used this name for chestnuts. *Jovi-glans* became *Juglands*, now the generic name of the tree—*Juglans regia* is the species. The Latins had the tree from Persia by way of Lydia and Greece. De Candolle thought that the Persians had the tree from China, but in Berthold Laufer's *Sino-Iranica* he quotes a letter, written during the Tsin dynasty, that is between A.D. 326 and 335, to the Princess Yu of Wu, from which it is clear that walnuts had just arrived, as a novelty, from the west. Hence, Persia is the source of this valuable plant, and China did not receive it until after it had been introduced to the west; the case of the grape-vine is similar: China did not receive *Vitis vinifera* until it was introduced from Sogdiana by General Can K'ien about 130 B.C.; and the Chinese never domesticated the several native *Vites*.

I would like to mention one other fruit, the fig. There is only one wild species, *Ficus carica*. The ancient Israelites were familiar with figs before 1200 B.C. The Egyptians had by then had them for probably a couple of thousand years. The plant becomes wild so easily that its original habitat is hard to determine, but probably it was native to Afghanistan, Persia perhaps, and Baluchistan. These regions were well within the ken of the Tigris-Euphrates civilisations, of the Indus civilisation centred on Mohenjo-daro, and of the outer Egyptian colonies. Any of these peoples may have brought the wild fig into cultivation. Hesiod did not know the fig. And the passages in which it is referred to in Homer are suspect as to age. However, the introduction to Europe occurred soon after Hesiod's time, for Archilochus writes of figs as a product of Paros early in the seventh century B.C. By the fifth century the fig was an Athenian staple. The decadent Athenians of the later age, notorious as delators, but still great fig-eaters, were contemptuously called by their enemies fig-informers, i.e., sycophants. The Italians had the tree from Greece, and Britain received it from Italy, sometime in the tenth or eleventh, perhaps twelfth century, although some say it arrived in Sussex by the hand of Thomas à Becket.

Europe, having received the fruits of the whole temperate zones, acted, in her turn, as diffuser, planting in the Americas, in Australasia, and South Africa. But the tale of distribution of fruit-trees is not yet over: the New Zealanders have discovered the value of the Chinese gooseberry vine, and a neighbour of mine in Kent is cultivating Indian tiparis for market. One wonders what fruits remain to be distributed beyond their natural habitat, over the whole of their possible range.

—Third Programme

The Comic Element in the English Novel—IV

The Mad and the Clubbable

By V. S. PRITCHETT

THESE are two especially English kinds of comic writing which have a certain subterranean relationship with each other and which I call the mad and the clubbable. I call that kind of comedy *clubbable* which is written for the *homme moyen intellectuel*, or perhaps we should call him the average sedentary man. I suppose it dates from Steele's *The Spectator*. It changes from generation to generation, as the club changes, and as the Way of the World changes. But in this kind of comedy we are always in the club, always in the world, and we are a more or less satisfied caste. The mode in which this comedy is written is ironical and it relies on a good prose style, generally of the polished and even elegant kind. The theme is that, above all, the intellect of the human animal is amusing, and that

ideas are funny: or, rather, that it is comical to have manners and a brain.

The prime characteristic of this form of comic writing is its conversational tone. Since it is educated, this conversation is not vernacular conversation. It is essentially polite. In certain writers the form has become, in fact, the conversation piece: in Sterne, in Peacock, often in Meredith, in Norman Douglas, in Max Beerbohm, in Aldous Huxley. What these writers seem to be saying is that ideas are dangerous. It is good to have them, but it is not good to have them too much. Experience is what really counts. Nature dissolves all. By setting two or three ideas against one another, these writers turn them into farce instead of enquiry. What they are really doing is to create a game. The game puts

a premium on skill in observing ideas and people, but because it is a game it guarantees freedom from the blistering view of human nature that a relentless psychologist might have. (The maxims of La Rochefoucauld, the insights of La Clos, for example, are not part of a game.) This form of comedy is not, of course, uniquely English; indeed, it certainly goes back to Rabelais. It appears in Anatole France and, in our times, in Gide's *Les Caves du Vatican*; but the English form is original because it has developed romantic, whimsical, and fanciful shoots and because it relies on the right to personal eccentricity. Voltaire is certainly not playing a game in *Candide*; Gide is intellectually serious about the 'gratuitous act', although the incident in which it occurs is cruel and farcical.

'Sir Orang Utan'

One sees the beginning of this form of comedy in the period of the French Revolution and at the time of the comical idea of the noble savage. Peacock had a good joke about this famous figure: he was Sir Orang Utan, and got mispronounced as Sir Haut Ton. There are signs of the genre during the dead period of the English novel round about Godwin's time and in the rather sticky but interesting novel called *Hermesprong*. It is Peacock who really lays down the pattern. A rich man invites an incongruous group of guests to his house in the country. They go for pretty walks; every man has his private madness or humour which he gives way to at dinner where people have been drinking a good deal of wine. There are usually one or two extremely attractive, intelligent, and vivacious girls. The talk is a mixture of persiflage and learning in a polyglot way: for Peacock was an omnivorous reader and a brilliant linguist. He was also entirely self-taught and one of his particular manias is a violent hatred of universities. The whole is cut up into play-like scenes and punctuated by farcical episodes. People get invited to rather bogus castles, fall into moats, are attacked by Chartists, get shut up in towers, and they generally go after the wrong girl. In some of the novels, there is singing and poetry. Peacock has the basic comic temperament—he is a poet distracted, inverted, undecided and, occasionally, regressive—I mean he writes verses. It is an important fact about him that he had success as a playwright and his burlesque points on to the work of Gilbert and Sullivan. The club member is always privileged to make fun of his club. Gilbert made fun of the Royal Family, titles, imperialism, and so on.

Peacock's comedy has a serious basis. He grew up in the period of the French Revolution, he saw the rise of industrialism; he was personally involved not only with Shelley but with mercantile capitalism in India. His long life made him at one end contemporary with Rowlandson and at the other end with Landseer. He was an important public servant in the Pepys tradition. He veered now towards the radicals and now towards the traditionalists; he annoyed both parties by his independence of mind and he obviously has a fundamental anarchism. How deeply he annoyed people can be seen by Hazlitt, who called him simply 'a warbler' and who said he would never be read. It is a great mistake to think a writer will not be read just because he blows hot and cold. Peacock's charm lies precisely in that, and he survives because he had style. He also veers between sensibility and common sense, between his poetry and his political and comical satire. Fundamentally, he makes his stand on the insolubility of human problems, on moments of grace and on the practical:

MR. MACQUEBY: Then, sir, I presume you put no value on the right principles of rent, profit, wages and currency.

DR. FOLLIOTT: My principles, sir, in these things are to take as much as I can get and to pay no more than I can help. These are every man's principles whether they be the right principles or no. There, sir, is political economy in a nutshell.

You can see from this how Peacock liked making fun of Johnsonian pragmatism. All the same he was plagued just as Mr. Crotchet was in *Crotchet Castle*:

'The sentimental against the rational', said Mr. Crotchet, 'the intuitive against the inductive, the ornamental against the useful, the intense against the tranquil, the romantic against the classical: these are the great and interesting controversies which I should like, before I die, to see satisfactorily settled'.

Peacock was also deeply interested in the social problems of the time. He was as indignant as Dickens on the subject of child labour and full of violent outbursts about the machine age. But the debate is always interleaved with farce:

'There is another great question', said Mr. Firedamp, 'greater than those, seeing that it is necessary to be alive in order to settle any question

and this is the question of water against human woe. Wherever there is water, there is malaria. Wherever there is malaria there are the elements of death. The great object of a wise man should be to live on a gravelly hill, without as much as a duckpond within ten miles of him, eschewing cisterns and water . . .'

The farce in Peacock is not simply wanton. It is the mark of the artist and indeed of the poet. His laughter has the poetic vitality. The armed peasants bursting in on the drinking party in the fake medieval castle called Chainmail Hall, where Dr. Folliott puts on armour and charges the rioters; the scientists who go fishing for mermaids in the moat; Mr. Firedamp getting drunk and falling into the fire, and the splendid scene where Seithenyn is feasting in *The Misfortunes of Elphin*—these are all imaginative flashes of farce which interrupt the wit of table-talk and wine-drinking like stage thunder and lightning.

The sense of theatre—a hangover from Sheridan—both in dialogue and comic scenes is an important constructional element in the conversational piece. Probably the best of these theatre scenes is the scene in the tower of *Nightmare Abbey* when Mr. Glowry discovers that his son—who is, of course, Shelley—has a lady hidden in a secret room. The son tries to distract his father by first of all reading a verse tragedy in a loud voice, and then, when this device fails, replies to all his father's questions by giving a detailed account of the physiology of the human ear in order to prove that his father could not possibly have heard any suspicious sounds. This is a stock comic situation and Peacock does it brilliantly. His women, as I said, are delightful and intelligent. Instead of sex there is love and, of course, plenty to drink. Peacock's drinking scenes are merry and since the people are wine drinkers and not soaks their conversation is improved by drinking. One of the finest drinking scenes comes in *The Misfortunes of Elphin* in which Seithenyn makes his exquisite speech on the subject of the embankment. The embankment is, of course, the British Constitution which the waters of reform are attempting to wash away. Seithenyn's speech is a high moment of poetical satire—that is to say the laughter outruns the scathing language of wrath. In this scene there are Sterne-like descriptions: where, for example, Peacock sets out the exact physical manoeuvres which Seithenyn made in order to get up from his chair and stand upright. Then he lets go about the beauty of the embankment:

'The stone work', said Teithrin, 'is sapped and mined; the piles are rotten, broken and dislocated; the floodgates are leaky and creaky'.

'That is the beauty of it', said Seithenyn. 'Some parts of it are rotten and some parts of it are sound'.

'It is well', said Elphin, 'that some parts are sound; it were better if all were so'.

'But I say', said Seithenyn, 'the parts that are rotten give elasticity to those that are sound, they give them elasticity, elasticity, elasticity. If it were all sound it would break by its obstinate stiffness; the soundness is checked by the rottenness, and the stiffness is balanced by the elasticity. There is nothing so dangerous as innovation—it is well. Cupbearer, fill. It was half rotten when I was born, and that is a conclusive reason why it should be three parts rotten when I die'.

One might call that the anti-Carlyle point of view: irony instead of the grotesque. Peacock is a liberal-minded man with tory instincts. Because he had style he has lasted.

The Peacock Tradition

At first sight it would seem that Peacock's highly original form of comedy died with him. But really it was absorbed into the tradition. Those rich and startling disquisitions on the character of the English upper classes in the over-fed, late nineteenth-century history, which are the high spots in Meredith; those malicious political discursions in the novels of Disraeli, or those club and country house scenes in the political novels of Trollope, contain the same brand of leisured, malicious, fanciful conversational wit. Max Beerbohm certainly has it. A novel like *Zuleika Dobson* is Peacockian in spirit, if not in form. It is artificial but it has the caress of kindness and nature. It is the comedy which crystallises life but is playing a game of cards with it. But the precise, purely Peacockian form of the conversation piece did lapse until once more a time came round that was like the time in which Peacock's mind had been formed. As I have said, he went on writing into the Victorian Age, but his mind was formed by the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars, the violent political assaults of the Industrial Revolution.

That period has obvious resemblances to the post-1914 period in our own time. When a culture breaks up, when the orthodox or traditional system goes, what happens to intelligent people? They believe no longer. The gods vanish, the half-gods appear. People talk. Talk becomes almost a value in itself, the symposium and the debate spring up. Everyone

becomes a kind of Mr. Crotchet. That is exactly what happened in the early 'twenties. Talk started up again and the conversation piece once more became a satire on talk starting up. It began, as we all know, with an attack on the traditions of the educated citadel. The clubbable took some hard blows in the early 'twenties. The most formidable blows came from Wyndham Lewis in books like *The Apes of God* and *Tarr*. There is a passage in *Tarr* which contains the essence of the attack and I shall give it here in order to show that the whole tone of conversation in the club had become rigid, unclubbable, and ungentlemanly. Tarr himself, of course, is the revolutionary artist who became the culture-hero of the 'twenties.

Hobson, Tarr considered, was a coward. You could not say he was an individual, he was in fact a set. He sat there, a cultured audience, with the aplomb and absence of self-consciousness of numbers, of the herd—of those who know they are not alone—a distinguished absence of personality was Hobson's most personal characteristic.

Tarr says to Hobson: 'What is your position? You have bought, have you not, for £800 at an aristocratic educational establishment a complete mental outfit, a programme of manners; for four years you trained with other recruits; you are now a properly disciplined social unit with a profound *esprit de corps* . . . You represent, my dear Hobson, the dregs of Anglo-Saxon civilisation; and there is absolutely nothing softer upon the earth. Your flabby potion is a mixture of the lees of Liberalism, the poor froth blown off the decadent 'nineties, the wardrobe-leavings of a vulgar bohemianism. You are concentrated, highly organised barley-water—any efficient state would confiscate your property, burn your wardrobe as infectious and prohibit you from propagating.'

Pleasure in Shock and Derision

That passage prepares us for the change that will overtake the Peacock tradition when it is revived by Norman Douglas and Aldous Huxley in their conversation pieces. Sweetness and light will depart; the pleasure will now reside in shock and derision; the talk will be about privies, birth control, and corridor-creeping. The difference is that, while Peacock graciously wavered and forgave with laughter and even can be said to have led his age into a sort of scholarly complacency, Norman Douglas and Huxley are essentially didactic. Douglas seems to want to drive us evangelically into wickedness. He calls it 'catching life by the throat'. It is difficult to know whether we are really seeing the smile of the comic spirit or the hard, deriding grin of the satirical preacher. Douglas and Huxley are not content with the English scene. They are cosmopolitans. They are scientifically-minded. They are exponents of the comedy of culture. It is the fraudulent Greek connoisseur in *South Wind*, the statue faker, who talks most convincingly about art and civilisation.

Douglas set out to teach us by taking us down the primrose path; Huxley is really more concerned with the mode, with culture-snobbery and the corruption of morals which takes place when the cult of art takes the place of religion. Secretly, he loves the horrors of the brave new world because of its streamlined vulgarities. In the early books of Huxley the conversation and action are good because they are impudent—the roof scenes in *Chrome Yellow*, or Rosie and her savage seducer in *Antic Hay*. He really likes the violent and outrageous—and that means, of course, that he too is really an indignant preacher. Douglas uses his violence for the attacks on the northern democracies and late Victorian standards, and he preaches the value of the Mediterranean or Greek way of life. He wants to revive 'the cunning Old World'. He does not invoke a brave new one. He has a certain scholarly dryness, a touch of the Scottish Calvinist. Above all—to quote the cant phrase of the period—he is out to 'amuse'. The incident of *South Wind* is often very funny but it is not in the least theatrical as it is in Peacock. It is really incident which is put there to moralise on—for example, when the lady pushes her husband off the cliff the idea is to sow doubt about the wickedness of murder in the mind of the bishop who sees the crime. The comedy lies in the fact that he is obliged to admit that murder under some circumstances might be desirable. The real analogy here, of course, is not with Peacock but with Bernard Shaw. Keith in *South Wind* makes plenty of Shavian remarks such as, 'God deliver me from a clean-minded man'.

There is a link between the comedy of conversations and the writers of nonsense. Both the nonsense writers and conversationalists are playing a game. There is seriousness up to a certain point but not rigid seriousness. Lewis Carroll, for example, plays with words very much in the way that Peacock did in *Crotchet Castle*. The cook's room catches fire when she is reading about hydrostatics and cookery. The footman

comes in and saves her. Lord Bosnoll asks how the footman happened to be passing there and Dr. Ffolliott says: 'Sir, as good came of it, I shut my eyes and ask no questions. I suppose he was going to study hydrostatics and he found himself under the necessity of practising hydraulics'.

It would not be hard to find a nonsense parallel to this in Carroll:

'I only took the regular course', said the Mock Turtle.

'What was that?' said Alice.

'Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with', the Mock Turtle replied, 'and then the different branches of Arithmetic—Ambition, Distraction, Uglification and Derision'.

'I never heard of Uglification', Alice ventured. 'What is it?'

And so on. It might be the satire of adult conversation pieces by a man who is sick to death of the Common Room and table talk. Alice is all about the sheer boredom of being grown up and knowing. It is a major fairy tale about the ennui and the boredom of having to have a brain which is such a powerful ailment of the British character and which we try to relieve by rudeness and private humour.

Modern criticism has been at pains to show there is nothing mad in *Alice in Wonderland*; that it is not a collection of random free associations—some have regarded it as political as *Gulliver's Travels*. It has been suggested by Shane Leslie that Alice is secretly the history of the Oxford Movement. Carroll hated controversy, he took the middle of the road in religious matters, was timid of public rows, loathed extremists; and Alice was his way of fending off life by turning it into child's play, into a sort of pretence. According to Shane Leslie the tum-tum tree is really the Thirty-Nine Articles, Humpty Dumpty is Verbal Inspiration, the oysters who hurry up to the carpenter to be eaten are the confiding younger clergy easily led astray, and so on. The only true clue we have is Carroll's own comment that the Queen of Hearts was 'a sort of embodiment of ungovernable passion—a blind and aimless fury'.

Then, far more subtle, there is William Empson's delightful comic exegesis in *Some Versions of Pastoral*, conducted chiefly from a Freudian point of view. But his best point is that Alice is a book about one of the chief preoccupations of childhood—growing up; and from this basis, Carroll may be said to be growing down, trying to become a child through fear of sex or adult emotional life. Alice is a very Victorian child, concerned with conventions, manners, rules, proper behaviour, as well as with magic and conundrums. Surely, the important thing about Alice is its perfect response to a child's brain, which Carroll plays upon as if it were a machine he exactly understood. There is most to be said, I think, for the comments of Elisabeth Sewell in her learned book on the *Literature of Nonsense*. Carroll's nonsense, for her, lies between two things—on the one hand what she calls 'an annihilation of relations, either of language or experience, a delectable and infinite anarchy knowing no rules, liberating the mind from any form of order or system', and, on the other a sort of 'structure held together by valid mental relations'.

Nonsense as a Game

Carroll's laughter is far from being lunatic, or random, or mad in the frightening sense; his nonsense is a game. And the suspense—so strong an element in Alice—is that of play, not feeling or adventure. If nonsense is always cruel and rude—and Alice is one of the rudest books in the English language—this is because an absence of feeling is proper to games. It is also, of course, proper for a child. The adult plays games to keep life at a distance or under control, or for the exercise of the faculties. Also to fill the boredom left by an emotional life which has been undeveloped or exhausted by a too brilliant brain, or by too many taboos or obligations. There is no poetry, no emotion, in Carroll as there is in Edward Lear. Carroll is matter of fact. It is the ordinariness of Alice that gives the indispensable norm to the comedy. Gulliver, one remembers, was an ordinary sensible man undergoing fantastic experiences. Gulliver also contains the same strange preoccupations with changing size, getting bigger and getting smaller, and he also had the same trick of looking at life as it were through a magnifying glass.

In one way *Alice in Wonderland* is a horrifying work which comes close to real madness. It is terribly literal. The comic side of madness is in the sudden transitions from fantasy to fantasy and to its brilliant but deadly adherence to the same ideas. It is impossible to catch these logicians out. No one can argue with a lunatic and no one can argue with the caterpillar in Alice. The Queen shouts 'Off with his head' in mad passion, but this mad order cannot be carried out owing to

(continued on page 1010)

NEWS DIARY

June 2—8

Wednesday, June 2

Representatives of the two commands in Indo-China meet in Geneva

President Eisenhower says that the Soviet Union has 'closed the door' to any immediate progress on his plan for the peaceful use of atomic energy

Mr. John Costello, leader of the Fine Gael, elected Prime Minister of Eire

Thursday, June 3

Five-power military talks on security in south-east Asia open in Washington

United States airline orders three Vickers Viscount aircraft—the first turbo-propelled machines to carry commercial passengers in the United States

Committee on coastal flooding publishes report

Friday, June 4

Greece and Yugoslavia agree that their treaty with Turkey should become a military alliance

Mlle. Geneviève de Galard-Terraube, the French Air Force nurse who remained with the besieged garrison of Dien Bien Phu, publicly invested in Paris with French Air Medal

Governor of Buganda reports improvements in situation there since state of emergency was reimposed

Saturday, June 5

Mr. Eden attends Cabinet meeting in London

In Geneva Mr. Molotov puts forward five principles for settling Korean problem

U.S. delegation in Geneva opens negotiations with Chinese People's Republic about Americans detained in China and Chinese detained in U.S.A.

Thousands of Whitsun holiday-makers drenched in widespread thunderstorms

Sunday, June 6

Representatives of eight allied nations attend ceremonies in Normandy commemorating tenth anniversary of D-Day

Two Europeans murdered by Mau Mau in Nyeri district of Kenya

First continental television programmes relayed from Switzerland and Rome to Britain and seven other European countries

Monday, June 7

M. Bidault and Mr. Molotov meet in Geneva to discuss composition of international commission to supervise an armistice in Indo-China

U.S. Atomic Energy Commission grants Dr. Oppenheimer the right to submit a legal brief on his objections to the recent security ban on him

Government to plan new drive against Mau Mau in Kenya

A.A. reports new records for Bank Holiday traffic

Tuesday, June 8

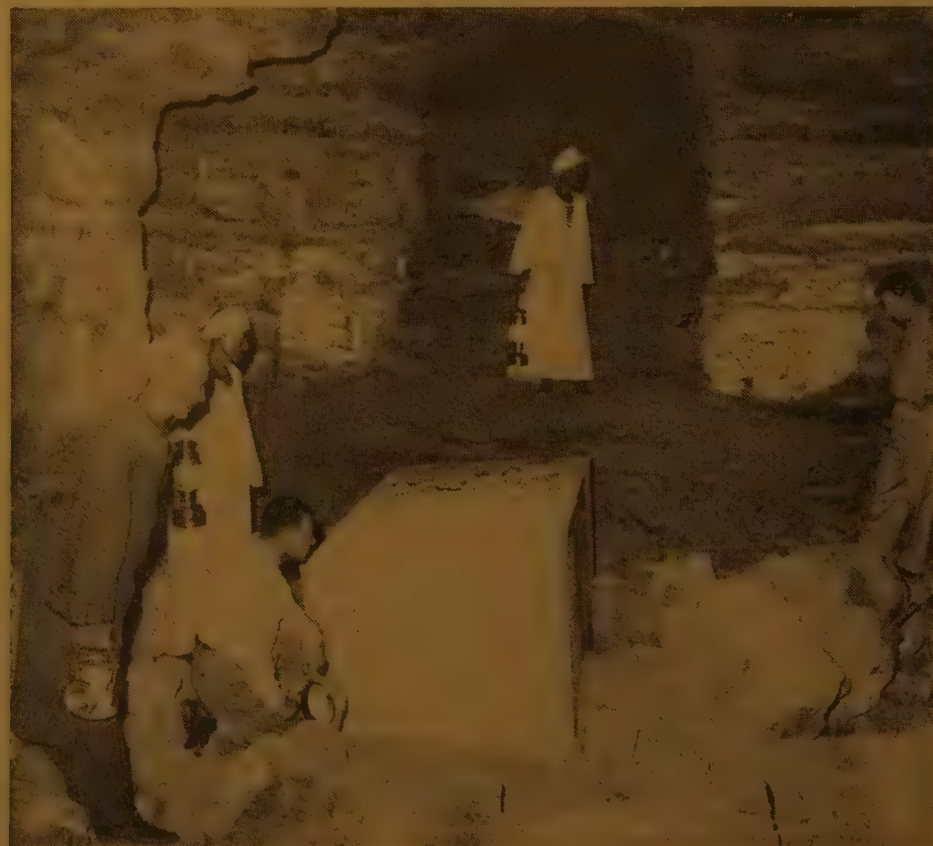
M. Bidault addresses open session of Geneva Conference on Indo-China under chairmanship of Mr. Eden

Executive committee of union of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen to seek early meeting with Transport Commission to discuss lodging turns

Wettest Whitsun for over fifty years



The tenth anniversary of D-Day was marked last Sunday by ceremonies at different places in Normandy. This photograph shows Sir Gladwyn Jebb, British Ambassador to France, speaking beside a monument, on the beach at Hermanville, commemorating the first allied troops to land



Last week the Egyptian archaeologist, Dr. Zakaria Goneim, who has been excavating beneath a step pyramid at Sakkara, announced that he had entered the burial chamber of an unknown Pharaoh. The photograph shows the chamber with the alabaster sarcophagus of the king in the foreground. Dr. Goneim (kneeling) said that he believed that the tomb is more than a thousand years older than that of Tutankhamen and dates from about the year 2,750 B.C.

Right: the Derby: the field rounding Tattenham corner at Epsom on June 2. 'Never Say Die', the winner, is fifth from the rails in the front row

President Tito and Queen Frederica

After seven 'Supper' has School of R was held



King Paul, who last week paid a state visit to Greece, seen with King Paul and Queen Frederica at the Royal Palace in Athens on June 2 when a dinner was given in his honour



The Republic of Italy celebrated its eighth anniversary on June 2 with a military parade in Rome. This view of the parade was taken from an arch of the Colosseum looking up the Via dei Fori Imperiali



The restoration of Leonardo da Vinci's 'The Last Supper' by Professor Pelliccioli, Director of the Brera Museum, is shown in this photograph which was taken during the ceremony that took place when the restored work was consecrated



S. Jungwirth of Czechoslovakia winning the 880 yards international event in the British games at the White City on Saturday when he beat R. G. Bannister of Great Britain



Whipsnade's three-weeks-old baby hippopotamus making his first public appearance last week



The final scene in the Stratford Memorial Theatre's production last week of 'The Taming of the Shrew'. On the left is Petruccio (Keith Michell); standing centre right is Katharina (Barbara Jefford); next to her, seated, Bianca (Muriel Pavlow), Lucentio (Basil Hoskins), Hortensio (Geoffrey Bayldon) and a Widow (Jean Wilson)

(continued from page 1007)

another mad intellectual difficulty. The executioner says, 'You can't cut off a head unless there's a body attached to it'. One might say that Carroll's mathematical intellect had reduced common experience to meaningless word-play. The meaningless is redeemed by the quickness of invention, by capping one trick with another—in the manner of the theatre—but, above all, by enclosing it all in a child's dream. Without his fidelity to the almost sickening, giddy tempo and transitions of dream life, Carroll would not have transcended the achievements of the conjuror. And implicit in this is the continual tacit comment of the sane mind of normal experience upon the madness of fantasy within: the comment of adult life upon child life. Many whimsical books have just gone in for the easy money of making the child's naive comment on adult life; Carroll really took the opposite and more difficult view: all the time we feel through the character of Alice herself, the comment of the grown-up world into which she is growing. One can very easily believe the story that another child upon whom Carroll tried his peculiar tricky mixture of dream and conundrum burst into tears.

The members of the club invent nonsense as an escape into free play; it is a way of escaping from life. The rules of the club are sterilising and intolerable. It is also a special form of wit; the nature of wit is to bring into fatal collision two contradicting ideas or images. From the collision there arises a new meaning, usually deadly. There is the same collision of images in nonsense—but no meaning emerges. But a new fancy may do so. Absurdity is primitive, nursery rhyme, a form of poetry.

One sees a parallel—but not a similarity—to Carroll in Max Beerbohm. *Zuleika Dobson* has a mad or extravagant idea, which is ornamented, artificial, and dandified. It is a comic poem to the dandified, narcissistic attitude of life; but underlying it, there is a true perception of real behaviour. The Duke says he will die if Zuleika does not love him, Zuleika agrees he ought to do so but not yet; Beerbohm has the inspired notion that all the undergraduates at Oxford declare they will die too. The fantasy becomes serious. The comedy depends on the incongruity between emotion and emotional behaviour. What Beerbohm is interested in is the dandyism of the emotions—how they dress themselves up. Max Beerbohm's art lies, I think, in an almost sad and satirical zest for catching new malice as it is born. In *Seven Men* he says:

Not long ago I happened to be staying in the neighbourhood and came across several villagers who might, I assure you, have come out of Braxton's pages. For that matter, Braxton himself, whom I met often in the spring of '95, might have stepped out of his own pages. I am guilty of having wished he would step back straight into them.

More explicitly you get this sense of awe which malice has when it is in at the birth of new malice in *Zuleika Dobson*, when Mr. Pedby reads grace at Judas College, Oxford:

Blushing to the roots of his hair and with crab-like gait, Mr. Pedby, the Junior Fellow, went and unhooked from the wall that little shield of wood on which the words of the grace are carved. Mr. Pedby was—Mr. Pedby is—a mathematician. His Treatise on the Higher Theory

of Short Division by Decimals has already won for him a European reputation. Judas was—Judas is—proud of Pedby. Nor is it denied that in undertaking the duty thrust on him he quickly controlled his nerves and read the Latin out in ringing accents. Better for him had he not done so. The false quantities he made were so excruciating and so many that, while the very scouts exchanged glances the dons at the high table lost all command of their features and made horrible noises in the effort to contain themselves. The very Warden dared not look from his plate.

In every breast around the High Table, behind every shirt front or black silk waistcoat, glowed the recognition of a new birth. Suddenly, unheralded, a thing of highest destiny had fallen into their academic midst. The stock of Common Room talk had tonight been reinforced and enriched for all time. Summers and winters would come and go, old faces would vanish, giving place to new, but the story of Pedby's grace would be told always. Here was a tradition that generations of dons yet unborn would cherish and chuckle over. Something akin to awe mingled itself with subsiding merriment. And the dons, having finished their soup, sipped in silence the dry brown sherry.

That reads like Beerbohm's satire not only on Oxford but on his own kind of joke.

Saki and Anstey of *Vice Versa* are variants of this real comedy which has the quiet, razor edge of educated malice and which steps out, with deadly effect, into fantasy. It is that sudden step-out into the fantastic which is always the brilliant moment of these writers.

The answer to clubbable comedy was low comedy, the comedy of the pub. Jerome K. Jerome, W. W. Jacobs, the Grossmiths' remarkable *Diary of a Nobody*, the Wells of Mr. Polly. The Grossmiths' Mr. Pooter would have loved to be a Mr. Crotchett. Alas, his gentility never led to refined conversation or wit, but to victimisation by vulgar friends. Perhaps I ought not to have suggested that English comedy lies between the sane and the insane, but, in the end, between the high and the low. The answer to Mr. Crotchett or Dr. Folliott is perhaps, after all, poor suburban Mr. Pooter writing his story of suburban manners:

Then they commenced throwing hard pieces of crust, one piece catching me on the forehead and making me blink. I said 'Steady, please, steady'. Frank jumped up and said 'Tum, tum, then the band played'.

I did not know what this meant but they roared and continued the bread battle. Gowing suddenly seized all the parsley off the cold mutton and threw it in my face. I looked daggers at Gowing who replied, 'I say, it's no good trying to look indignant with your hair full of parsley'. I rose from the table and insisted that a stop should be put to this foolery at once. Frank Mutter shouted, 'Time, gentlemen please, time', and turned out the gas, leaving us in complete darkness.

That is not the tone of Crotchett Castle, but you can see that some suburban Crotchett was Mr. Pooter's ideal. He wished to be a club member, to live a sociable life of the mind, within the conventions. He desired to be a polite diarist. He was forced into low comedy and, between about 1880 and 1914, low comedy may be said to have created its own artificial comedy of sententious night watchmen, poor clerks and small shopkeepers, its own mad Arcadia of improbable misadventure.

—Third Programme

Letters to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters on broadcasting subjects or topics arising out of articles or talks printed in **THE LISTENER** but reserves the right to shorten letters for reasons of space

How the Hydrogen Bomb Works

Sir,—It is astonishing to read a letter from so clever a woman as Professor Lonsdale with so little knowledge of world politics and so small a regard for the safety and the suffering of her fellow men and women.

That war is wrong and to be avoided no sane person doubts, but as long as wrongs exist so must the right-minded help to alleviate any suffering that might be caused. A hydrogen bomb dropped on London might cause hazards at West Drayton and the Professor's children might be left injured and helpless were it not for help which even these non-believers would receive from the good Samaritan Civil Defenders.

To suggest that a bomb would be dropped

because we have military aircraft for our defence against an aggressor is to show the utmost ingratitude for those brave men who will defend us and our way of life.

If Professor Lonsdale as a good Quaker acquiesces in aggression on our Christian country, it is well that there are still in England those who believe in Christianity enough to fight for it.—Yours, etc.,

London, S.W.1

MURIEL HOWORTH

Director

Institute of Atomic Information for the Layman

The Teaching of International Relations

Sir,—Your correspondent Mr. Cowling has a distinction, and I am glad of it, between a message and a syllabus. It was a message that,

not into twenty, but into fourteen minutes and a half, I had endeavoured to compress. It is a syllabus that he has it seems been sorry not to find.

No less grateful am I that he has not, as I would judge, been concerned to pull his punches. For his comment has gone far to convince me that, with one at any rate of your readers, I may well have been less than altogether successful in getting the message across.

En passant, the adjective which, in his letter as printed*, I am given as using of the society of sovereign States was not in fact mine: nor indeed had I spoken of 'the structure' of 'current affairs'. Whether, to him, a glance at the syllabus on the structure of 'international society' (see the *Unesco* booklet, page 95) would

have made it plainer what I meant is not for me to know. Of a different sort of syllabus he sees it as a 'great advantage' that 'you can within its bounds teach, and more important preach, almost anything you want to...'. The 'advantage' he refers to is evidently that of those who teach. My interest has been rather in the possible, and possibly legitimate, wants of those who come to learn. My question concerns not what they could be taught, but what they will be. And this seems worth the asking, given the possibility (see booklet, page 84) that 'in some instances the reason why a college or university has not as yet provided fully for the teaching of international relations' may be 'because it has been under the impression that it did'. Mr. Cowling might consider the claim—noted by Geoffrey Goodwin in *The University Teaching of International Relations* (Blackwell, 1951) at page 118—that 'like any other subject, International Relations derives its essential characteristics, and indeed its very "raison d'être", from its special focus of interest'. The question is whether, in a given centre, the undergraduate is in a position, should he so desire, to include within his scheme of study, if only as a subsidiary, a subject having this special focus. May I assure Mr. Cowling that I, in my time, was not? Was he?

Mr. Cowling might, should he care to, consult President Grayson Kirk of Columbia University, whose subject it is, for the view that 'work in international relations, at least in some institutions, should be administered by a separate international relations department', since 'in any event, by whatever process is best adapted to local conditions, the principle must be established that the study of international relations is not merely a subdivision of the field of political science' (see booklet, page 77). And he likewise might inquire into how, not a long way from Reading, the subject of international relations is, without obtrusive duplication, being cultivated in quiet coexistence with international history, international economics, sociology, criminology, anthropology, political science, and international law.

But I ought not perhaps to assume that Mr. Cowling will be wishing to know of these things. And anyhow there is one respect in which, as I must infer, he might find the 'Structure' syllabus insufficient. It is an invitation to teach. It is not a licence to preach.

Yours, etc.,

London, W.C.2

C. A. W. MANNING

[*In Mr. Cowling's letter the adjective 'national' was misprinted as 'national'. We regret the slip.—EDITOR, THE LISTENER]

Sir,—Professor Manning's timely appeal (THE LISTENER, May 27) for the wider recognition of international relations as an academic discipline is most welcome. As a schoolmaster I was particularly glad to note his challenging reference to the schools. May I urge, as a practical suggestion, that university authorities should favourably consider the inclusion of this subject in the list of choices for the examination at advanced level of the General Certificate of Education? If we are serious about the need for a more accurate 'frame of reference' by which democracy can attempt some valid appraisal of foreign policies, then I suggest this study should have official recognition as a suitable subject for sixth-form work in Grammar Schools.—Yours, etc.,

Hampton

ALEXANDER MILLWARD

Free Speech and American Liberty

Sir,—My attention has been called to a letter in THE LISTENER of May 20, from Eleanor Stewart-Thompson, commenting on my broadcast on 'Free Speech and American Liberty', whose text appeared in your journal on May 6. I have noted with approval, in your number of

May 27, a general reply from W. J. Igoe; but I should like to add a few sentences of my own.

Miss Stewart-Thompson writes that the American Civil Liberties Union itself 'has taken approximately the Congressional Committees' line on members of the legal Communist Party—refuses to defend them, prohibits communists from membership'. This is not so. We defend the civil liberties of communists exactly as we defend those of anybody else. For example, we are now engaged in defending the civil liberties of a communist labour union official (Emspak) by challenging in the Supreme Court the very mandate of the House Committee on un-American Activities. We simply bar communists—along with fascists and members of the Ku Klux Klan—from our governing bodies and staffs, because no adherent of any totalitarian doctrine believes, as we do, in civil liberties for everybody.

As to Miss Stewart-Thompson's comparison of conditions today with those of 1920-21, I should like to remind all readers of what I myself said: 'It [the present climate of fear] does not have the hysterical intensity of that earlier threat, but it is likely to cause us more trouble, because it is an outgrowth of circumstances likely to persist indefinitely'. And, as to her claim that judicial decisions outlawing anti-Negro discrimination are 'largely flouted in practice', I should like everyone to note that the opposite is true—or, for example, the annual average individual cash income of Negroes would not now be rising at twice the rate of increase among whites.

By the '105 political prisoners in gaol for no overt action', I suppose Miss Stewart-Thompson means to refer to the communist leaders indicted (approximately twenty are in prison after conviction) under the Smith Act, for advocating the violent overthrow of the Government. The American Civil Liberties Union has opposed that Act from the beginning, because we think that the prohibition of even such advocacy should depend on the existence of imminent danger of violent action. We opposed that Act in the cases of Trotskyists and nazi sympathisers, when the Communist Party supported it! We opposed it in the Dennis (communist) case, and we will continue to oppose it by asking the Supreme Court to overrule in subsequent cases its decision in that case.

In such forthright opposition, the free expression of the American Civil Liberties Union, and of the host of other Americans who agree with us, has not been 'practically silenced'. The United States is going through a bad moment, but I am—as I said in the broadcast—"predominantly confident", because 'a great and growing company of Americans, high and low' are constantly occupied with its real problems in civil liberties, without wasting our substance in riotous drivelling.—Yours, etc.,

London

PATRICK MURPHY MALIN

Christian Duties in the New Community

Sir,—With Mr. Sorensen's main points—his deep concern for the future influence of the Christian churches and his emphasis upon the regenerative power of Christianity—I am in the fullest agreement. The points of discussion he submits lead out into a very wide field and I can only briefly indicate my answer to his queries.

It would not be correct to contend, of course, that Christian thinkers had in all respects anticipated the issues that arise from the findings of modern scientists, though men of Christian loyalty and spirit have been amongst the outstanding scientists. It is true that the Church held fast longer than should have been the case to the traditional cosmology, but I would submit that many Christian leaders and a very large section of the Christian Church were

amongst the first to accept the evolutionary thesis and recognise its application in a field beyond what even Darwin anticipated.

On the question of slavery, the early Church, while lacking any political influence, refused to recognise any distinction between slaves and freemen within the fellowship of the Church. The association of some churches with modern slavery is, of course, to be profoundly regretted, but William Wilberforce and his associates derived their impulse from Christianity in their struggle for freedom. Some of us like to remember that the last letter which the aged John Wesley wrote was to Wilberforce in which in very strong language he bade him go forward in his great campaign.

It is true that some of the leaders among the Methodist people were opposed to the action of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, but the rank and file of Methodism supported them and took no small part in the public agitation which led to their being granted a free pardon. The effect of religion in the early days of trade unionism and the movement for social betterment was clearly indicated by Sidney Webb (Lord Passfield) in his *Story of the Durham Miners*.

I certainly do not claim that in order to nourish 'the essential Christian ethic and impulse' it is necessary to accept all the Christian dogmas such as the Virgin Birth. What I do claim, however, is that if that Christian ethic and impulse is to be a dominant and directive force it must be because of one's acceptance of the authority of the teaching of Jesus Christ and this implies the recognition of His unique person—to put it in that very general form. 'The spiritual and moral validity' of Christianity does derive from the person of our Lord and while that does not necessarily mean that one must adopt a particular dogmatic interpretation it does, I submit, mean the acceptance of the authoritative character of the person and work of Christ. I should not have called this a theological test at all, but an inevitable condition of accepting the ethics of Christianity.—Yours, etc.,

Birmingham, 13

E. BENSON PERKINS

The Development of Soviet Law

Sir,—Mr. N. Jasny is quite right when he writes in his letter (THE LISTENER, May 20): 'It was quite a surprise to see mass death starvations in the Soviet Union in the winter 1932-33 denied this year of 1954 (see the letters by Mr. A. J. Halpern and Mr. A. Rothstein in THE LISTENER of May 13)'.

It is even more surprising for me, who lived at this time in Ukraine and witnessed the starvation in Ukraine and visited many places in Ukraine during 1932-33. I saw personally no fewer than 200-300 dead human bodies on the market places, roads, pavements, railway stations, etc., and many more people who were near to death from starvation. But I see that those facts and arguments are non-existent for Mr. A. Rothstein and some other people. They want to be presented with facts from Soviet sources or from writings of communist fellow-travellers (see THE LISTENER of May 27).

I wish to draw your attention, Sir, to some facts which can be found in authentic Soviet sources. For instance, the Soviet censuses of population of 1926 and 1939 show the following figures:

	1926	1939	Increase
Total population of U.S.S.R. (in millions)	147	170	23
Population according to nationalities:			
(a) Russians	77	99	22
(b) Ukrainians	31	29	2

As can be seen from the above figures, the proportion of the Russian population in relation to the total population of the U.S.S.R. has grown

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Drawing by Henry Rushbury, R.A.

Steel makes history

THE INCOMPARABLE hammer beam roof of Westminster Hall has endured for more than five hundred years: but only just.

This century saw part of the roof on the point of collapse. Death-watch beetles had reduced thick beam ends to thin and brittle shells. Holes gaped in the main collar beams.

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S.72

from 52.3 per cent. to 58.4 per cent., while the proportion of Ukrainian population actually decreases from 20.5 per cent. to 16.6 per cent. (see *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*, vol. U.S.S.R. Moscow, page 60, and *All-Union Census of Population*, 1926).

I should like to ask those of your correspondents who reject the evidence about the mass death from starvation of millions of Ukrainians, to explain the fact of the decrease of Ukrainian population in the U.S.S.R. between 1926 and 1939 by 2,000,000, which is proved by Soviet official sources.

Yours, etc.,

London, W.3

M. MYRONENKO

The Anatomy of the English Countryside

Sir,—In his talk, 'The House through the Trees' (THE LISTENER, May 27), Dr. Hoskins does less than justice to the influence of Georgian planning on English landscape.

These planners had first to reject formal layouts of French and Dutch origin, which were as alien to natural landscape in this country as the airfields Dr. Hoskins resents. The Georgian style, with its addiction to curves and scattered planting, could emphasise the beauty of its site—as may be seen by any passenger on the London-to-Brighton line who cares to look across Redhill at Lower Gatton House on its downland slope. And, having dispensed with walls, the Georgians were able to merge the settings of individual estates into a larger pattern; so that one house could answer politely to another, and both acknowledge any dominant feature of the neighbourhood. (An extreme example is the beech clump on Chanctonbury Ring, shared as a decoration by Georgian gardens on opposite sides of the Weald.)

The Georgian enclosures, in fact, were carried out at a period unusually favourable to the successful adornment of landscape, and Dr. Hoskins' reference to surgical operations, mutilations and so forth are most inappropriate.

Yours, etc.,

Seaford

LAURENCE KITCHIN

The Comic Element in the English Novel

Sir,—I read Mr. Pritchett's talk on Dickens with deep interest and even deeper surprise. What evidence has Mr. Pritchett to support his claim that 'the hatred of children is a fundamental Victorian theme'? I am willing to learn, but I know of none. What evidence has he for saying that Dickens could not stand the sight of his own children after the age of two or three? It is true that he was glad enough to see his sons out of the house as soon as they were grown, but that was because they were men. They might have a will to oppose to his own and might even merit some attention in their own right. Dickens had such devouring vanity that he must always command the centre of the stage, but that does not mean that he did not quite simply enjoy entertaining his children; according to his daughter, Kate Perugini, he fascinated them. The man who invented a handful of fantastic names for himself as father was surely able to bear the sight of his children, in his own time and on his own terms.

Dickens certainly made an uncommonly coarse farce of childbirth, but not, I think, because he found pain and poverty intolerable. What he found intolerable was the distraction of the limelight from himself. Mrs. Dickens was a dull, nervous, defeated woman who constantly irritated him. But, by the current convention, she might expect, even if she did not get, chivalrous attention and respect during pregnancy. Dickens wanted to have all eyes at all times on himself. However domineering and superior the husband may be, he must take second place at

childbirth; he is even a figure of comedy. This did not suit Dickens at all. The birth of a child turns the limelight away from the most demanding and dominating father. In his treatment of childbirth Dickens behaved exactly like a vain and mean-minded actor playing the principal role in a play in which, for one scene, the limelight is turned from him to a subordinate character. The worst kind of actor will set out to reduce the scene to farce. In character, Dickens was the worst kind of actor. Hence Sairey Gamp, especially the extraordinary private fragment concerning the women in his own acting company.

Yours, etc.,

Woodford Green

COLM BROGAN

Sir,—There are certain errors of fact in Mr. Pritchett's airy and patently malicious monologue on Sterne. In the first place, his mother was not 'something of a slut'; she was, however, very much of a shrew. This is of some importance in interpreting his character—a humane analyst of this intriguing personality must consider the effect of a shrewish mother on a delicate and sensitive child.

There are no grounds, moreover, for assuming an 'Irish ingredient in his comic genius'. Nothing is known for certain of his mother's parentage. It has been suggested that she was of French Huguenot extraction; if proof existed that her maiden name was *Hebert*, and not the name of her first husband, this theory would have some foundation. On the other hand, there is some evidence to suggest that her father may have been the son of Laurence Nuttall, a Lancashire squire. The undoubted French element in Sterne's genius might incline one to favour a French origin for his mother; but one cannot build up truth on a supposition.

It is not accurate, either, to say that Sterne 'was brought up in Tipperary'. The truth is, he travelled round from one military station to another, sometimes in England, sometimes in Ireland, until, at the age of ten, he left Ireland altogether, to live with his father's relations in Yorkshire and be educated at a nearby grammar school.—Yours, etc.,

London, W.8

MARGARET R. B. SHAW

'Pinorman'

Sir,—People create strange idols out of their self-importance. Not content with a sketch of Norman Douglas as a writer and a man of strong character with some abnormal and unpleasant traits, they try to pretend he was immaculate. The spectacle of Saint Norman Douglas, Martyr, is too ridiculous. They conceal the fact that many of the things I say are supported by letters or quotations from Douglas' own writings. They are perhaps unaware that many of the scenes I describe have still living witnesses. One of them is the widow of D. H. Lawrence. She has sent a letter answering one particularly idiotic notice, but in view of Mr. Low's remarks (THE LISTENER, May 20), I wish to quote a few lines from a personal letter from her to me:

You made it all alive again. You give this wonderful bit of living, unique, never to be repeated. You treat Pino with special tenderness. How good he was when Lawrence was ill! Then came the bitter blow of his meanness. I am sure it was Norman. . . . I knew Norman earlier than you when he still had his full diabolic splendour that could not have friends, only slaves. But you are fair to him. You could have presented an ogre feeding on small boys. . . .

Good luck to *Pinorman*! I am glad it was written and how it was written.

Ever yours,

[signed] Frieda

Douglas' 'friends' should remember that you

cannot obliterate the truth by abusing the truth-teller.—Yours, etc.,

Montpellier

RICHARD ALDINGTON

'Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry'

Sir,—In his interesting review of Professor Maritain's *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, M. Duthuit remarks that the author 'may be expected to look with most favour upon an art in which everything tends to be knowable and geometric'; that by following his argument we must conclude that 'artistic creation . . . is synonymous with the production of objects of beauty destined to give pleasure to the eye of the beholder'; and that he 'remorselessly excludes from his neo-Thomist temple all that we might regard as *modern* among the productions of the present time'.

To put these comments in perspective, may I quote two sentences from the book?

The Surrealists were right in unmasking the part (not principal, but real indeed) played by the workings of the automatic or animal unconscious in the soul of the poet, and in emphasising . . . the element of madness which inhabits him. [page 84]

To the very extent to which the fine arts make beauty an object . . . they recede from beauty and deviate towards academism. [page 174]

Finally, to mention only painters, he cites with approval the names of Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Kandinsky, Klee, Matisse, Miró, Mondrian, Picasso, Rouault, Utrillo, and the early Chirico. M. Duthuit seems to demand an unusually wide range of sympathies, if this list strikes him as remorselessly exclusive.

Yours, etc.,

London, S.W.7

NIGEL GOSLING

Miss Moberly's Apparitions

Sir,—Your correspondent Mr. Ralph Edwards combines his curiously black and white conceptions of the morality and psychology of testimony with regrettably unexact standards for the evidence required to establish the factual basis for a revolution in science. He does not attempt to meet the criticisms, to which I drew attention, which undermine the erection of evidence for the actual occurrence of the adventure at Versailles as *later described*. But instead he follows Mrs. Iremonger, and what rapidly is becoming a new fashion in the discussion of *An Adventure*, by telling us other stories about the 'psychic' gifts of the protagonists. Yet even if the evidence for these new claims were considerably better than, on the basis of what has so far been published, it seems to be, still this would do nothing to remedy the weakness of the evidence for the actual adventure at Versailles itself. The idea seems to be that if one leaky bucket will not hold water, the situation can be saved if only enough good sieves can be brought to the rescue.

On Edith Olivier's reply to early S.P.R. criticism I can only refer to later replies to this in S.P.R. publications: of which Mr. Edwards seems unaware.—Yours, etc.,

Windsor

ANTHONY FLEW

Sir,—I was interested in Mrs. Lucille Iremonger's talk, 'Miss Moberly's Apparitions', printed in THE LISTENER of May 20. One of the people whom Miss Moberly and her companion claimed to have seen at Versailles—the 'dark-faced, pock-marked man' with the repulsive face—was thought to be the Comte de Vaudreuil; but I was struck by the fact that his description fits that of the famous Comte de Mirabeau, who was from 1789 to 1791 the leader of the Third Estate, and adviser of King Louis XVI. He was a dark man with a pock-marked face, exceptionally ugly and venomous. Perhaps, therefore, Mirabeau was the apparition.—Yours, etc.,

Keighley

IAN DEWHIRST

Art

Our Parish Churches

By ALEC CLIFTON-TAYLOR

At least three-quarters of the books about English architecture published during the past twenty-five years must have been concerned with one aspect or another of the period since 1550. Partly, no doubt, this is a reflection of the fashionable enthusiasm for all that is Classical, Mannerist, Baroque, anything, in fact, except Gothic, unless it be Victorian Gothic. But principally it is because this is where the need for scholarship lay, and in some directions still does: for example, as was pointed out recently in an article in *THE LISTENER*, there is still no adequate monograph on Hawksmoor; and none as yet on Chambers. Twenty-five years ago the bibliography of the Stuart and especially of the Georgian periods was incomparably less rich than it is today.

This same period has also seen invaluable contributions to our knowledge of English Romanesque, notably from the late Sir Alfred Clapham and, more recently, from Mr. Boase and Dr. Zarnecki. But on our Gothic architecture a previous generation had already produced a flood of books, the best, such as those of Francis Bond, J. C. Cox, and Hamilton Thompson, in their somewhat dry way very good indeed. And although in recent years notable new Gothic contributions have been made by Mr. Salzman, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Crossley, the late F. E. Howard, and others, no important book on the English parish church has appeared for a generation (except Howard's, in 1936), for the very good reason that the subject had already been well nigh 'written to death'.

Mr. Cook's new book* can be welcomed, chiefly for its detailed and really valuable description of the English parish church as it was in the Middle Ages. If you are in the habit of prowling round country churches (town churches on the whole are less rewarding, because they are more likely to have Victorian pews, nasty glass, and maybe a smoky atmosphere), you may have noticed that the nave is often much finer architecturally than the chancel: Mr. Cook will tell you exactly why. You may sometimes have wondered how it is that parish church towers are far more often at the west end than in the centre; what the room above the porch was used for; why they built transepts; what the real purpose was of those 'low side windows' (so-called), so much beloved by the writers of the *Little Guides*; what forms the sermon took; what happened if a church was made collegiate; why the Norman builders were so fond of doorways with recessed orders (as in the example illustrated); what arrangements were made for seating; why fonts have covers, and sometimes such elaborate ones; what were the favourite subjects for wall-paintings; or why so many more rood screens have survived in Devon and Cornwall than anywhere else. All these questions, and many more, are answered in these pages with learning and authority, backed time and again by just the right examples. It is indeed a mine of information. Did you know that on

festive occasions dancing in church was once perfectly in order? Or that at one time ritual required that the celebrant of Mass should himself drink the rinsings of the chalice?

The picture of the parish church which emerges from these pages is of a place which, though sometimes ill lit and always unheated, was nevertheless a brimming hive of activity throughout all the daylight hours. Some of these activities, like the parrot-recital of soul masses by thousands of chantry priests, seem futile enough by the standards of today: superstition was rife; symbolism was everywhere. ('Pope

Innocent III decreed that the altar slab should be a monolith, a symbol of the unity of the Holy Church . . . When an altar was consecrated, the bishop anointed the slab with holy oil in five places, one at each corner and one in the middle, in memory of the Five Wounds of Christ'. And so on.) The parish church, nevertheless, was the point of focus of medieval community life, social hardly less than religious, to an extent which it is not easy for us today to realise, until we read a book such as Mr. Cook's.

For many people, then, although there are no major passages of previously unpublished material, this will be a very useful book. On the other hand, I should hesitate to recommend it to anyone coming fresh to the subject, because it communicates so little enthusiasm. Mr. Cook is a writer whose every statement is underlined, as it were (in the manner of Bond and of Cox), by the citation of anything from one to a dozen supporting examples, which makes for authoritative, but not for lively, reading. He may have known the thrill of standing beneath an angel roof in East Anglia, or face to face with one of those majestic towers of Somerset: but if so, he does not let us hear about it. Rather, one feels, would they be a couple more specimens for his collection. Aesthetic assessments are few, and when they are attempted they are, in my opinion at least, not

always sound. Nor is this, in any important sense, a book about the styles of architecture, although it covers Saxon and Norman as well as Gothic: the short chapter on 'The Architecture of the Parish Church' is reached only three-quarters of the way through. In his architectural treatment, moreover, there are a few surprises. The tower of St. Stephen's, Bristol, surely, is a queer example of 'the Somerset school' of tower-building, being almost wholly of the very different Gloucestershire type. And reference to the maps does not seem to bear out the statement that 'more often than not the church lay to the north' of the town or village.

There are useful indices and good, clear plans. But the quality of the half-tone photographs is very uneven, and their arrangement, in miscellaneous batches inserted here and there, is not very convenient, nor are any of them referred to in the text. If only some publishers had to use the books for which they are responsible!



The west door of Iffley Church, Oxfordshire

What Is There in Horse Racing?

Post-Derby reflections by JOHN WISDOM

I LIKE Epsom. It hasn't the fine, free, on-top-of-the-world feeling that Salisbury gives; it isn't glorious Goodwood; it hasn't the classic severity of the Rowley Mile. Everyone can mention courses more beautiful. And if what you want is to be under a wide sky, to feel the turf under your feet, and to have an uninterrupted view of high-classed horses going their best pace, then Epsom is not the first choice.

One may like to stand by oneself well down the course away from the crowds. The horses come past on the way to the start; a big bay colt in winkers, bounding and fighting for his head, a filly by Alycidon at a trot drifts down the course swishing her tail but without malice, her ears pricked, sweet as a debutante. Behind you the noise of the ring is a distant murmur, down at the starting gate they stand, flicker too and fro, in a wavering line move forward; the flags go down, they're off, and in the silence nothing seems to move till suddenly they're coming, the thud of hoofs, the creak of leather, the rush of silk; a small grey horse is moving up to the leaders, and they are passed, to fight it out with ears laid back and desperate faces up the last furlongs of the straight.

Giving Things a Flavour

That is all very well in its way. So are the waves on lonely beaches and the woods in May. But they are not Brighton beach on a Sunday. The hymn says only man is vile. Maybe; but he gives things a flavour. Without his folly, his greed, his pride, his love of grace, might it not all be a bit of a bore? Maybe in heaven, as in a landscape by Claude, one may have security without tedium, exhilaration without the possibility of evil. They say when Time is done we shall transcend it all. But here and now one understands a man who wishes to go, when he dies, where the racehorses go, when the big bar tilts and the last bell rings, and some must win and some must lose.

For horse racing is not only racing horses one against another. It is many things to many men, and one may see this is so on Derby Day at Epsom. Win, win or a place, or place only, I'll do you the Derby. Some say it's the money in it. And why not? Money means all it will buy; and money won is a present from fate.

We all know those depressing crowds under the back of the stands at the dog-race meetings. They can't see the racing because they haven't time to leave the betting queues. And there are those like them at horse races. But that only marks the contrast. It is not all like that—and one good way to see that it isn't all like that is to take a ticket for the Cheltenham Gold Cup, Chepstow, Brighton, or, on Derby Day, for Epsom Downs or Tattenham Corner. In your train there will probably be one of those men in a suit of that inexpressible smartness somehow associated with racing. There will be the two elderly ladies with their lunch in a bag, the serious foreigner in spectacles, and, of course, the stout man in a mackintosh studying the *Star*, *News*, or *Standard*. At this point I usually do this myself, although I seldom bet and much more seldom win. At the first point-to-point I ever attended my eye was taken by some lovely creature in a golden coat and beautiful conformation. She didn't win. Next time I said to myself: 'Now its no good backing these long-priced horses at point-to-point meetings'. So I back a good down-to-earth bay horse with lop ears and bandages, that has won his last two races. He does very well in this race, too, but he comes down at the last fence but one.

From the station it is only a few yards to Tattenham Corner and there the whole scene is before you—the country to the hills beyond dark against a dubious sky, the crowds, the tents, the roasted nuts and the coloured drinks, the roundabouts and the swings. Here are the bookmakers, in whose eyes lurks that almost insolent audacity which enables them when there are only two furlongs to go and the favourite's out in front still to quote the odds against it. Sure enough, something one hasn't noticed is creeping through the flying field and now is going to win at the nice price of 17-1.

This is the course where, in 1780, Diomed won the first Derby for Sir Charles Bunbury who was, I read, highly esteemed for his amiable

temper and kindness of heart. This is where Hermit won in 1867 for Mr. Chaplin. The story goes that Mr. Chaplin lost to the Marquis of Hastings the woman he had hoped to marry, that he then bought Hermit, and won £140,000, while the Marquis of Hastings lost £100,000 including £20,000 to Mr. Chaplin.

Here, year after year, on horseback, in curricles and barouches, later in phaetons, gigs, dog-carts, and coaches, and now in motor-cars and buses, people have come to see the Derby. We still come though the horse is no longer part of our lives as he was in all those centuries when he lent us strength and speed in peace and in war. It was relays of horses that brought the Roman general in nine days from Rome to repel an invasion on the Scottish border. That was a special effort. And it was not until centuries later that one could take a coach from Brighton in the morning, do business in town, and be back in Brighton at night, and the Telegraph Coach was timed to do in seventeen hours the 170 miles from London to Exeter.

Nor was the racehorse irrelevant to all this. It was the road-makers who made lighter vehicles possible. But the horses that kept the wheels turning in the fast coaches had more than a little of the thoroughbred in them. Indeed, on some stages on the road, for instance over the Basingstoke flats, a team of thoroughbreds did the job—it was called the galloping stage. And long after the locomotive had driven the coaches off the roads, a bit of blood, originally eastern blood whether through the racehorse or the hackney or the American trotter, made all the difference between a wearisome plodding journey to the market town or to the station and getting along comfortably at ten to twelve miles an hour, or more if pressed. The Americans owned, and still own, the fastest harness horses in the world. The record for trotting is Greyhound's mile in 1.55 and four-fifths, if my memory serves me, and for pacing Billy Direct, 1.55. Black Rod did twenty miles within the hour. These, of course, are track records. But a horse that can do about thirty miles an hour on the track will not be troubled to bowl you along the road at a good pace for a good while. The present-day American trotter goes through Mây Queen, Maud S. (2.8½), Twelve Pointer and the rest to Hambletonian and Messenger, and there we are back at early thoroughbred blood and so to the Darley Arabian, the Byerley Turk, and the Godolphin Barb.

When a Fast Horse Meant Something

A fast horse meant something then—not, of course, that one wished to be always tearing along the roads as fast as possible. But there is pleasure in riding or driving well within his capacity a horse that can cover the ground if need be. Nowadays a fast horse means to us only one that wins races or is better at five furlongs than at two miles—or at least this is all it means to us unless we use a horse for hunting or polo. Even then, it is not like using a horse for work. But, just as in the days before we heard so much of aeroplanes, and 500 and 600 miles an hour, motoring people used to speak with friendly rivalry of their times between London and Edinburgh, so in those days of the horse we were joined in a rivalry and freemasonry of our own.

I remember walking with my nurse up the village green at home. Suddenly up the road behind us a horse and light spring cart came by. It was a farmer we knew, his name was Mr. Abbot; he sat on a single board, his head sunk somewhat between his shoulders, and he looked neither to left nor right. His bowler rammed well down on his head was elderly, but his horse was immaculately turned out, gleaming coat, neat mane, banded tail. What I noted with anxiety was the terrific stride with which it covered the ground. Was it faster than my father's horse? And then I was a little anxious about the pony another neighbour, Mrs. Russell, used to drive. She used to drive herself, her child, and the nurse to church on Sundays. I can hear now the clamour of the church bells as she pulls up in the rectory yard. 'Nine and a half minutes this morning, Arthur', she says as she sweeps the traces into circles and hurries the pony into a stall, for now at any moment the bells may change to that single note which means that the parson and choir are under starter's orders.

Nine and a half minutes for two and a half miles meant then the air on your face, the slight swing and lurch of the vehicle, the rasp of wheels in the mud, and the beat of the horse's hooves as, swinging round the corners of the winding lanes, you checked him a trifle before descending a steepish pitch and now again you let him go. Recently in an aeroplane I passed over the twenty miles of the Channel in about seven minutes, but we hardly seemed to move. It was excellent in its way, but was not what we meant when we used to speak of a horse that could travel.

Travel and transport: surely it is here that man has most successfully solved his difficulties. Surely here, if anywhere, he has reached his goal. And no doubt he has done a good job. And yet here, too, there appears that exasperating feature of so much success. What you gain on the roundabouts you lose on the swings. And it is not merely that: that's the trouble—it is that, in achieving what seemed the essence of what we wanted, we find the essence has eluded us; in cutting out what seemed to hinder or to be irrelevant to our satisfaction, we find that what gives contentment is more entangled with the tiresome than we had supposed. Surely when a man sets out on a journey his goal is to reach that journey's end as fast as possible, as speedily as may be. And isn't speed a matter of passing from one point to another in the minimum of time? And yet, just as we have it all laid out so that we have only to press a button to be where we want to be, just then the whole thing is apt to seem absurd. Just then we are apt to realise that what we needed was not merely to be at our destination.

Is It Worth Winning?

This feeling of collapse and absurdity which comes over us in so many things may come over us in a small but sharp way in the simple matter of a horse race. We have won, perhaps, and the 'all right' flags are flying, but somehow the whole thing seems ridiculous. I am not pretending that this sort of dissatisfaction is always misplaced. Not at all. We may indeed have had things out of focus. But, on the other hand, the arguments by which we confirm in ourselves or spread in others such feelings of sudden contempt or depression are often muddled. And it is interesting to notice that the same arguments by which clever persons sometimes represent to us as worthless things much bigger than horse racing are also used in this smaller matter. And here, too, they are fallacious. You know how they run. They are presented in the form of questions with an innuendo. Someone asks, or perhaps one asks oneself: 'What is the purpose of it all? What is there in it? What is it but a matter of whether one horse has his head in front of another?'

These questions have a familiar and worthy ring. They may voice a useful challenge. But they need watching. Behind the words 'What is the purpose of racing?' lies the innuendo that if it doesn't serve a purpose it is no good and waste of time and absurd. But the innuendo is itself absurd. For those things, such as surgical operations, or hewing coal, or what you will, which do serve a purpose, do so only because they are means to things which are worth while in themselves, worth while not because of any purpose they serve but because of what is in them—health and well-being before a warm fire, playing with a friend a game of draughts or ludo, if you like. With some things it is easy to realise that there is more in them than meets the eye or can be put into words—music, poetry, mathematics—though even here we have the muddled critics who ask in a complaining way: 'What purpose do they serve?' However, here we may boldly answer for we have the support of the good and the great: 'These things aren't merely means, they are part of what makes our lives worth while. With other things it is not so easy. Some things seem small, seem easy, and seem to have little in them; and then, if we give time to them, we feel bound to answer 'What is there in them?'

What is there in racing? Behind such a question is another innuendo, the innuendo that if we cannot set out in words what makes a thing worth while then it isn't worth while. But this won't do. Maybe there are no words which will do this fairly, or maybe we haven't the skill to find them. I could not say what makes 'Hamlet' a good play; perhaps I could give hints; perhaps someone more skilled than I could do better. But, however skilled he were, I am sure that much of what makes 'Hamlet' 'Hamlet' will run between his fingers, much of it anyway. And this is not less true of small things. I could not put into words what may make a game of croquet on the rectory lawn something one remembers. One may give hints. A game of croquet may have a flavour sweet or bitter. For a game of croquet is not merely a matter of

getting balls through hoops, any more than a conversation is merely a matter of getting noises out of a larynx. Both in croquet and conversation, human personality finds expression; human personalities are joined whether for good or not.

And racing is not merely a matter of getting a horse first past the post. That small incident is the last move in a long game which began before the colt was born. Somewhere, someone bred and reared him. Single Flower by All Alone out of Basket of Flowers by Rich Gift out of Double Dew by Bachelor's Double out of Maid of the Mist. Somewhere, someone schooled and trained him through hopes and disappointments. It's an old game, and a game with a wide appeal. The Greeks raced their four-horse teams before the Romans took it up, and, in thousands, 'careless of the sun or of the rain, remained in eager attention, their eyes fixed on the horses and the charioteers . . .'

Ten thousand American trotters keep the wheels spinning. And still today's winners are news from the smallest pub in the heart of the country to the largest in town. 'What won the Derby?' is a question which joins by invisible threads Melbourne to Beckhampton, Calcutta to Karachi, Newmarket to Kentucky. It is a game with something of the flavour of life itself.—*Third Programme*

The Minute

Walking across a world and map,
Panting from having climbed the cliff
When a blue field's one dazzling flower
Made a gold day, no wonder if
The hidden inner weir should snap
And loose its strong long-hoarded power
All in a flash: as if the sharp
Grid of his map turned wire, and poured
Music out of one single harp
Where all the strings could ring one chord.

Half lost in dust-dry bracken: then
Up from the mind's deep middle jet,
Clear as a bird, the sudden gleam
Shot like a double day; and yet
He scarcely saw the moment when
The gentle current's crystal stream
Turned ice turned diamond and took light
And stole the secret of the sun
To fuse and flare and make one bright
Minute and then the thing was done.

JOHN HOLLOWAY

The Old Trousers

Here across the unmade bed they lie
Where they were thrown in random haste:
The supple image of the man that I
Shall be—the exhausted ghost of thigh,
Calf, knee and belted waist.

Lifeless, how many signs and states
Of life their cast-off, limp dejection still displays!
A sunburst of creases focuses and animates
The rumpled crotch; and prayer perpetuates
The spirit's energies, in cramped backs of knees.

In the ragged turnups, dust and fluff
Pocketed in every trudging street,
The sandy trash of ports, the rough
Stuff of earth that gathers unassumingly enough,
Twin graves that wander at our very feet.

Till death unbuttons all,
And into the dark's long wave
Our blind, forked bodies fall
To wear earth's garment, that fits us well,
And hides our nakedness within the decent grave.

JAMES KIRKUP

The Listener's Book Chronicle

Prosperity and Parenthood

By J. A. Banks.

Routledge and Kegan Paul. 21s.

'MARRIED MEN are married to women or ideas, but married women are always married to a man with so much a year'. So said a Victorian wag and Mr. Banks has taken up his tale. His subject, in sociological terminology, is 'Family Planning among the Victorian Middle Classes'—their ideas, that is, about their standard of living, marriage and the responsibilities of family life. Lest it be thought that Mr. Banks has written a severely forbidding and merely academic treatise, it may be said at once that his book is thoroughly readable and employs sources which are not used by economists in their compilation of wage indices. Mr. Banks has made a preliminary reconnaissance of an almost un-mapped historical area and the present plight of the social strata he is studying, whether it is, as Mr. Graham Hutton and others have frequently assured us, one of decline, or some mere occupational re-orientation, or relative displacement by the rise (whatever that may mean) of hitherto less influential strata in the social pyramid, gives his work a special claim on our attention.

It is time that a new scholarship arose to dispute with economists their solitary occupancy of this sort of field. As such, economists are interested but little in class status and social mobility. Their studies of wages and living standards are primarily directed to the quantitative determination of the dimensions and distribution of national incomes, the rewards of factors of production and their many kindred themes. Their labour markets are not inhabited by human beings so much as by statistical units with more or less stable propensities for this or that. . . . But the sociologist wants something different. He wants to watch them founding families, to discover their social propensities at work, and how they are liberated or imprisoned in their 'patterns of expenditure' or by their 'paraphernalia of gentility' (these being the titles of two of Mr. Banks' last chapters). It may be true that nobody quite knows what the term 'middle class', in the singular or the plural, really means—definition is necessarily elusive in a phase of the history of our industrialist civilisation when machinery was displacing labour with increasing momentum as in the long Victorian era—but there were uniformities of behaviour, there were amenities and disamenities, expectations, disappointments and ambitions, which were common to whole ranges of our society; there were exclusivenesses, and leaderships and economic pressures which stimulated patterned responses and preferred known beliefs, and out of all these things grew standard attitudes to the processes of living. These are truly worth knowing about. In an age when social policy occupies a bigger place in many folks' minds than economic policy, not to know about them is sheer obscurantism or worse. And among them none has had profounder social consequences than the substitution of the small family for the large as the normal social pattern.

Mr. Banks is concerned with the historical development of this now normal social pattern in the middle classes of the Victorian period. He studies this development with resourcefulness and certainty. He recalls the conflicts which became the centre of discussion in Victorian society of family limitation. He examines middle-class family budget expenditures, their domestic equipments, and the expenses of their sociabilities. He is interested in their

standards of education, of holidays and of domestic service, and of the pressure of other imperatives upon them until both their costs and the prevailing occupational specialisations and divisions of labour between men and machines make their ancient philo-progenitiveness both a cause of embarrassment and an unnecessary anachronism. It is, indeed, an interesting and important story.

There are many things left by Mr. Banks for other workers to do, and there are many sources still to use. Mrs. Lynn Linton's *Girl of the Period* (1868) and her other essays in mid-Victorian social, especially feminine, behaviour would have added a point here and there. There are other novelists, forgotten in the main, whom he should have laid under contribution as well as his favourite Trollope. There are the ranges of religious and other journalism to be probed for the conscious and unconscious attitudes of the days of his concern. There are, however, few contemporary books of the 'seventies which examined the problems he is immersed in in his sort of way. He has made some good bricks with poorish straw and there are more still to fashion. But he has made an excellent start and many students of social development will be grateful to him.

Economic Development and Tribal Change: a Study of Immigrant Labour in Buganda. Edited by Audrey I. Richards. Heffer. 30s.

Like many other African territories nowadays, the kingdom of Buganda has problems connected with labour migration. The trouble here is unusual; it is not that too many people go abroad to seek work, but that too few immigrants arrive to satisfy the demands of local employers. Every year for some time past about 100,000 people have been coming into the country from other parts of Uganda, from Tanganyika and Kenya, and especially from Ruanda-Urundi. In spite of this great influx, supply has not kept pace with demand. Although most of the immigrants work on peasant holdings for African farmers, many also hire land to grow cotton for themselves, and some have been joined by their families and become permanent settlers. The Ganda, in consequence, complain that much of their land is passing into the possession of aliens. The Government and other non-African employers likewise experience shortage of labour at times.

Various Government committees have discussed such special problems as the possibility of increasing the labour supply. But the book under review is the first attempt at a comprehensive analysis of the immigration generally. The work of five writers associated with the East African Institute of Social Research, it deals *inter alia* with the history and extent of immigration, the routes and destinations of the immigrants, their reasons for migrating, the types of activity in which they engage, the duration of their stay, their relations with the local inhabitants, and the specific problems arising from their presence.

The historical and geographical chapters are solid and competent, although the latter is longer than it need be. There is also a good account (by Dr. A. W. Southall) of the Alur migrants from North-Western Uganda, which provides much basic information lacking elsewhere. But the most interesting chapters, perhaps, are those discussing how the immigrants settle down after arrival. Material of this kind is seldom found

in studies of African migration, and the attention devoted to it here is welcome. Dr. Richards, by whom the chapters were written, concludes that the prevailing system of land tenure makes economic assimilation of the immigrants fairly easy, but that their social absorption is much more difficult, owing both to the persisting importance of kinship ties and to a system of political authority closely associated with descent and land ownership. However, since she does not distinguish clearly enough between transient migrants and permanent settlers, her discussion is not always easy to follow, and she and another of the contributors apparently disagree about the ability of Buganda to absorb so many immigrants (pages 172, 192).

The book is certainly an important contribution to our knowledge of African labour problems. But much of it seems to have been hurriedly written and carelessly edited. There are several mistakes in simple arithmetic (pages 64, 134 f., 138, 199), inaccurate cross-references, including one to a non-existent chapter (pages 134, 183, 200, 201), and such loose wording as 'at least one case was noted' (page 75), 'two or three were interviewed' (page 139), 'one or two landlords spoke' (page 197), and the inclusion of a man's widows among his descendants (page 174). It is a pity that the Institute's first major publication should be marred by such blemishes. Is the explanation perhaps contained in the footnote (on page 9) that 'None of the contributors to this report was working anything like full-time on the problem'?

East-West Passage: A Study in Literary Relationships. By Dorothy Brewster. Allen and Unwin. 21s.

'The Russian Bear', Miss Brewster reminds us in the first chapter of this valuable study, 'appeared on the scene long before the Russian Soul'. It is indeed surprising that the Soul achieved the spectacular success that it did, considering the Bear's impressive start. Certainly no nineteenth-century reader of translations from Russian literature 'could have been free' of long-established, and mostly hostile, preconceptions about Russia and her people. Many of these had their origins in the early 'travellers tales'—and many of them have only too familiar a contemporary ring (incidentally Miss Brewster tells us that one of the most intemperate of the earlier accounts, the Marquis de Custine's *Russia in 1839*, was re-issued recently in America).

It is pleasanter to contemplate the 'innocents abroad'—Mark Twain hobnobbing with a Grand Duke at Yalta, Lewis Carroll trying to make himself understood to his chambermaid in St. Petersburg by drawing pictures, George Borrow greeted with 'a shout of wonder' by the Moscow gypsies, as he stood up in his carriage and addressed them in 'musical Romany'—or, earlier still, Jeremy Bentham at Potemkin's 'model colony' in the Ukraine among the 'Wedgwood ware, silver dish covers' and 'dirty iron knives and forks'—surrounded by 'an assortment of English, Welsh and German experts in dairying and farming'.

In the nineteenth century of course the Bear had not yet become for America the potent and menacing symbol that it was for England. Units of the Russian fleet indeed paid friendly visits to New York and San Francisco during the Civil War—and a young American named Eugene Schuyler met some of the officers and began to learn Russian. His translation of Turgenev's

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which sets the mind soaring and which we know instinctively as we read, will possess significance, not for the moment but for all our life. This is such a book. I hail the volume and salute the bright departed spirit who gave it form."

DIOGENES IN "TIME & TIDE"

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Fathers and Children, published in 1867, marked the beginning of American enthusiasm for Russian fiction—which had as one of its most interesting results Henry James' literary apprenticeship to Turgenyev, his 'beautiful genius'.

When, however, the Soul (temporarily) replaced the Bear as emotional symbol it was in this country, between say 1912 (when Constance Garnett's translation of *The Brothers Karamazov* was published) and the 1930s, that 'the Russian fever' was at its most hectic. A transition from a view of the Russians as 'A people passing rude, to vices vile incline' (Master George Turberville, 1589) to one that found them 'extraordinarily like the English . . . but sweeter in their hearts, beautifully devoid of the sense of property, and beautifully troubled by consciences that are sharp-edged like a child's' (Miss Rebecca West, 1915) inevitably produced some giddiness. Mr. Middleton Murry's *The Evolution of an Intellectual* is usually taken as marking the climax, though Miss Brewster is inclined to award the prize for the highest temperature to Mr. John Cowper Powys.

Miss Brewster (who was until her retirement recently Associate Professor of English at Columbia University) relates this story of the infiltration of Russian culture with admirable scholarship, and in a style both lucid and lively. The shrewdness of many of her own general observations makes one regret that she has allowed herself to be tied so closely to the methods of American literary research, but there can be no question that her book brings us much closer to understanding an influence which in spite of the emotional excesses that accompanied it has had a profound and lasting effect on the west.

Feeling and Form

By Susanne K. Langer.

Routledge and Kegan Paul. 28s.

The Schoolmen, based on Aristotle, defined art as '*recta ratio factibilium*'. The work was in the first place '*factibile*', to be done, necessary; the 'right manner' was applied to it. Even since the 'loss of the centre', belief, aesthetics were therefore bedevilled by the question: What is the work of art if it is not '*factibile*', that is to say of unquestionable necessity? In what other way is it 'necessary', if it is? Is it the expression of a primary urge, perhaps a kind of play? But how then is 'ratio' applied to the eruption of the subconscious? And what are the products of this process?

This difficulty was noticed by Kant in his *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*: '... the basis of art is a something in which the theoretical faculty gets bound up into unity with the practical in an intimate and obscure manner'. Freud in *Eine Kindheits-erinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci* was equally cautious and warned against the complexities of this problem. The question of symbols in post-religious art has proved equally thorny; Christian art undoubtedly achieved symbols: does post-Christian art also? For if it does not can it be communicated and so be useful if not 'necessary' in the scholastic sense? If what the artist gives is sublimation of his unconscious, are the products also valid for the unconscious of others, and thus symbols in another sense? At this stage it was tempting to throw out the 'ratio' factor and to argue that the work of art is essentially 'chaotic': a counsel of despair.

Dr. Langer in her book answers that art is the creation of forms which are symbols of human feelings, skill being applied to make them perfect. Clive Bell's 'significant form' touched off this train of thought, and Dr. Langer's book is an attempt to give meaning and content to this magic but vague formula.

Whether the reader is prepared to accept a solution which is basically optimistic in that it

implies the possibility of a perfect and yet godless world is another question; but the details of Dr. Langer's book inspire great confidence. The way she describes artistic space and the creation of tensions by the artist shows great insight into processes of creation: the artistic tensions are understood as projections of the tensions which make up normal human feeling, the artist being able to give form to them: in this sense then, the work of art is a valid symbol. Wide vistas are opened up by this introduction of the term 'tension' into aesthetics. Both Baudelaire and Delacroix have noticed that the composition of colouristic painters is based on tension (the seeing-together of parts belonging to diverse objects, a supra-objective and abstract experience based on physiology, and for this reason fundamental and 'epic'). And it is rather remarkable how well Dr. Langer's theory stands the notorious 'Cézanne test': '... Virtual space, the essence of pictorial art, is a creation, not a re-creation. Yet most great artists, and especially those who made the boldest departures from the actual form of things, e.g. Leonardo and Cézanne, believed they were faithfully reproducing nature . . . Cézanne was so supremely gifted with the painter's vision that to him attentive sight and spatial composition were the same thing. Virtual space was his mind's habitat. Perhaps Leonardo, too, could 'copy nature' so naively because he actually saw only what . . . would create the primary illusion, the semblance of space'. Or: '... Art is a logical, not psychological, expression . . . the emotion in the work is the thought in the work'.

Josiah Gilbert, in his *Cadore or Titian's Country* of 1869 was perhaps the first among modern writers on art to notice that Titian's pictures, irrespective of their actual content reflect as such alpine experience in that Titian did not merely represent identifiable Dolomite features, but that, especially in later works, he creates images of what he has seen as a boy: nudes make one think of glaciers at sunrise; altogether the relations between the components of his paintings, or as one would say now, the tensions which he creates are shaped youthful experience perfected in the course of a unique life. Similar possibilities of thought, but greatly developed and applied to painting, music and literature, appear in *Feeling and Form*; all who are interested in the meaning of artistic creation will find much that is noble and truly humane in this book.

Reflections on the Cinema. By René Clair. William Kimber. 18s.

Considering the low level of intelligence to which a film producer must appeal if he has reasonable expectations of remaining in business, it is remarkable that any critic possessed of a brain should survive, week in and week out, the distorted versions of life that are unwound before his wearied gaze. His excuse could be, of course, that jobs are hard to come by, and that very occasionally a picture is thrown on the screen that he wouldn't willingly have slept through. But even this excuse will hardly serve anyone who deliberately sets out to add to the already top-heavy pile of books purporting to deal with the art (so-called) of the cinema. For in this direction little that is new may be said; the cinema having remained for many years now the commercial industry into which it perforce developed directly the high cost of production made artistic experimentation almost an impossibility, which leaves a writer on the subject with precious little to do, apart from sighing heavily for the return of those dear silent days when Griffiths was an inspired inventor and Chaplin the greatest clown in the world. True, he can put in a good word for the early Disney, and his own interpretation of Eisenstein; but

beyond this he is forced to cover very worn ground indeed, and to no very fruitful purpose.

And yet one would be sorry to have missed René Clair's reflections on his craft; for these, although casually set down, and consisting often of old opinions reviewed in the light of recent events, add up to a discourse that may be followed for pleasure as well as for instruction. What Clair, as a writer, has, that so many of his colleagues fatally lack, is a sense of proportion supported by a sense of humour. Never having had any illusions about the cinema, he is able to regard with a spirit of equanimity the moribund state it has reached. Undoubtedly he has enjoyed making films, which is why we have so much enjoyed the films he has made. Yet somehow one doesn't see him, in the event of cinemas disappearing altogether, weeping for their loss. He might even consider it to be not a bad thing. For as long ago as 1923 an idea struck him whose importance has increased with the years: has become, in fact, the danger that threatens us today.

It would be interesting (he wrote then) to study what effect it has on the young, who grow up under the sign of the cinema . . . moreover, films show us exquisite human forms, smiling and enchanting us alone. The most virtuous young man has time to fall in love with twenty ephemeral goddesses before he reaches the age when he can get engaged to the daughter of some friends of his parents. Think of the pangs of jealousy, the passion, the confusion. . . . The cinema is, indeed, a highly dangerous invention. Who can tell what the cinema's fierce little eye will be looking at next? . . . If I were in the shoes of a sensible, respectable citizen I would give it some thought. Soon it will be too late. The camera will have engulfed us all.

Every page of this book contains an idea that merits consideration, or a piece of film criticism belonging to the first rank. It is after all only what one would expect from an artist of René Clair's distinction.

Handel. A Symposium edited by Gerald Abraham. Oxford. 25s.

This new, and admirable, volume in the series of symposiums edited by Gerald Abraham builds up, in the long chapters allotted to them, a distressing picture of the decline and fall in public esteem not only of Handel's operas, which is an old story, but of his once immensely popular oratorios, which is a comparatively recent one. He has, indeed, had to pay a heavy price for being bound to the now discarded conventions of his time: and when the Editor, in his Preface, exhorts us to get to know the operas and the oratorios, we look hopefully through this book to see if any practical suggestions are made in order to bring about this desirable end. Julian Herbage writes, indeed, with heart-warming enthusiasm about the Oratorios but does not touch on the question of their revival: but Professor Dent, after alluding to the revival of some of the operas abroad (based on much edited German editions) faces the problem squarely and gives some excellent, if hard, counsel which he sums up in these words: 'The conventions of Handel's theatre must be accepted, and they must be respected too . . .'

If they are accepted, and respected, there seems to be no reason why, in an age starved of melody, one of Handel's entrancing ballet-operas, such as 'Ariodante' (which has an excellent libretto) or 'Alcina', if put on at Covent Garden with the care that was expended on Purcell's 'Fairy Queen', should not prove a welcome revelation to the present generation of opera goers, and a box-office success. The prospect for the revival of the Oratorios, so far as the general public is concerned, is less certain: but some of them are well suited to dramatic performance.

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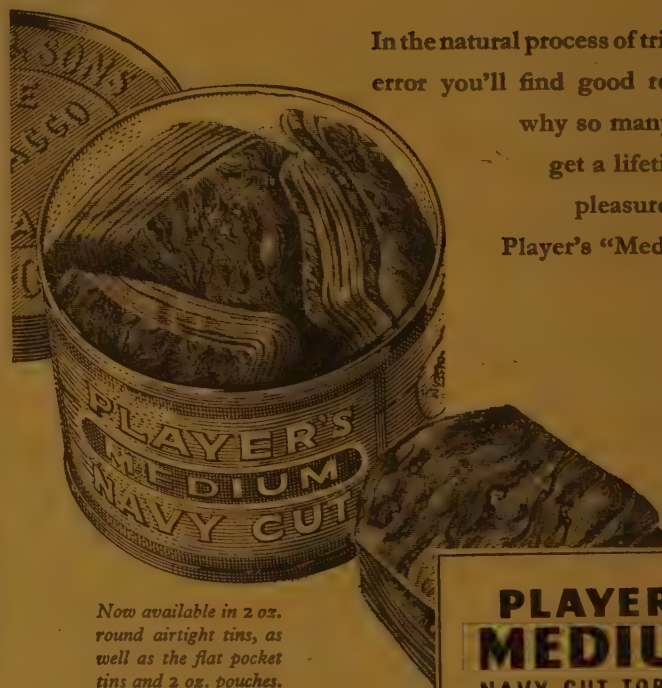
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volume deserve special praise. Basil Lam writes with urbanity and discernment about Handel's church music and orchestral music, and Anthony Lewis arouses a keen desire in one to make more than a casual acquaintance with the songs and chamber cantatas. For the realisation of that desire it would have been helpful if

William C. Smith's scholarly catalogue of works had included some references to modern editions of the rarer works.

The remaining contributors are Percy Young on Handel the Man, John Horton on the Chamber Music, Kathleen Dale on the Keyboard Music, and the Editor (whose learned

footnotes pepper many pages) on Points of Style.

This book is bound to awaken a new interest in Handel's music; and its pioneering spirit would receive powerful assistance if the gramophone companies, who have recently been paying so much attention to Vivaldi and Haydn, were now, for a change, to consider Handel.

New Novels

The Ampersand. By Jack Common. Turnstile Press. 10s. 6d.

Old Men Have Grey Beards. By Leopold Louth. Chapman and Hall. 9s. 6d.

The Affable Hangman. By Ramón J. Sender. Cape. 12s. 6d.

THE nearest thing to perpetual motion is those two hoary heavyweights, Individual and Society, slugging each other round the fiction ring. Individual is doing all right. The boy has bounce. Knock him down, and he comes straight back again. He always goes down, but punishment means nothing to him: he knows he is sure of immoral victory—until Society takes to writing novels.

Will Clarts, hero of *The Ampersand*, is certainly a bouncer. This story is set in Newcastle at the time of the first world war. Will, an engine-driver's son, has just left school at the age of fourteen, and we accompany him on the first three years of his assault on society. Not for him the oily hands, the factory number of working-class destiny. He has vast ambitions. Society is the great mother, eager to pillow him comfortably on her bosom. As a trifling preliminary to the establishment of that worldwide business concern, Clarts & Co., he enrolls as a student at Skilbeck's Commercial College. He has the ability to do well at his work, but prefers to distinguish himself here as a peddler of stolen pencils. It is the same at his first job, with Messrs. Mealing and Dillop, Solicitors. He knows from his wide reading that all property is theft—and he wishes to become a man of property. Alas, alas.

It is no accident that Dickens and Gogol are mentioned in the text. But what of Thurber? Clarts seems to be by Khlestakov out of Walter Mitty, with a virile shot of blood from a Georgie observer. Mr. Common, like his hero, has read widely. He is in love with the eccentric rogues of literature, and no one will blame him for that. What he has adopted he has made his own. His grotesques are credible, buoyant with Tyneside air. He writes in gusts. Not everyone will enjoy being belted by his prose, but a strong wind invigorates once in a while. He is flamboyant, he is extravagant, he rudely interrupts the genteel murmur of modern fiction—but not so rudely that one can overlook the satirical detachment that anchors his style, or the free fantastic mind that gives it life. But I wish he would curb his addiction to hyphenated words: these tabloid inventions, far from enlivening the narrative, are often dead ornaments, brass nails driven too deliberately into the structure.

Leopold Louth does not belt the reader: he is far too busy doing his riotous worst with the society described in *Old Men Have Grey Beards*: England in Coronation Year. Lord Mortice, at 79, is still a vigorous dissident, the sort of man who proposes that the House of Lords hold their debate on absenteeism among miners during the four days of the Ascot June meeting. His second son, Neville, ex-Guards, is prominent in the jaw and nothing else. Part of the novel concerns his pursuit of Susan Martock, daughter of a prosperous farmer, their marriage (one of the aristocratic bridesmaids 'seemed to be just coming up for the fifth ronde'), and Neville's efforts to establish himself as a gentleman farmer while seducing the

housemaid. The other main theme involves Neville's priggish elder brother, Lord Rigor, and his attempt to bring culture to the countryside. He and Otto Grotz, the celebrated impresario, raise yet another pimple in the bright rash of festivals—The Trumperty and Beresoke Festival of the Arts, which gives to the world a new masque by Art Abinger, that musical genius who sometimes tortures his fans, at the first presentation of a new work, with 'fears of a pleasant evening instead of a memorable experience'.

This book would not be so funny were the author not so savagely serious. And it is funny, intensely funny, a great clout of ridicule directed at aspects of our society, in particular the foolishness that pervades the arts. It is contemptuous about those who mistake vague artistic leanings for the true stuff of art, scathing about the publicity-soaked society which worships personality and has no time for solid human worth. It has all the makings of farce, but turns out to be something more solid, since it has relevance to life. Both here and in *The Ampersand* the outstanding individual, as accepted by society, is not an individual at all; he is a person who has betrayed his individuality, sold out to society and become a performing animal.

Yet these studies in social responsibility, entertaining though they are, lose something of their power in the presence of a novel like *The Affable Hangman*. This book may nauseate you, but it will hardly leave you indifferent. The story is told by a journalist, an official witness at a Madrid execution, who persuades one of the hangmen to tell his life history. It is a conventional gambit of criticism to object to the story within a story, but this introductory chapter, the journalist's chapter, strikes an anticipatory note of horror which sounds throughout the book. Even the most innocent pleasures are soured by it.

Ramiro, the hangman, begins his life in a remote Spanish village. He is illegitimate, hateful to his mother, a boy of marked intelligence. He accidentally poisons the father of a girl whom he would love, had he the capacity for love, and he has to leave home. Then follows a series of picaresque adventures. He works in a circus, then goes to Madrid, where he is helped by a distant relative, a duke; he spends a period in gaol, later gets involved with syndicalists, has an affair with a beautiful drug-addict, witnesses police reprisals on a rebellious village, and returns home with a prostitute just in time to be impressed into the Civil War. He sees acts of bestial savagery and eventually, after the war, makes his successful application for the post of hangman.

After that sweet catalogue it may not be surprising to learn that Ramiro is indifferent to society. But what is exceptional about him is that he is indifferent from his birth. He exists in the margin, the perpetual observer; he does not want to enter into life. He does not assert himself; he takes the line of least resist-

ance, like the natural man he is. Even his contradictions are the contradictions of nature. When he sees innocent peasants butchered by Civil Guards he neither condones nor condemns. Such things are, and such things make him even more reluctant to commit himself to this society. But where, then, is he to exist? 'When we have blood before us, innocent human blood, it is hard to escape from reality, and it is impossible to stay in it'. But he owes life a debt; he discovers that 'we are all witnesses of everything by virtue of the simple act of living, and for that very reason we are all responsible'. So, entering into life, he takes the one job most natural to the modern age... 'the entire social order rests on the hangman, yet no one wants the responsibility of being hangman. Why?' He sacrifices happiness to truth. 'I will kill honestly, drawing upon my hands the scorn deserved by all, and shunned by all'. The individual has at last found his place in society.

The fable of Ramiro's life symbolises a state of human degeneracy which we willingly ignore. What Sender evokes is not simply the mood of a single life but the atmosphere of a world with blood on its hands. There are, of course, immediate implications in his chronicle of events in Spain (the Burgos hangman is cited as the most efficient of them all), but his Spanish scene becomes an epitome of a wider disorder. Yet, for all its horror and the gruesome jolt it gives our sleeping perceptions, the book does not depress but exhilarate. Only a writer with faith in human dignity could give such a terrible picture of man. Florence Hall's translation gives a fine technical edge to a book which cuts deep.

One or two recent children's books—ages eleven and up—deserve mention. *Big Tiger and Christian*, by Fritz Mühlenweg (Cape, 15s.), is an unusual story about two boys caught up in the Chinese Civil War of the nineteen-twenties and forced to make a journey across the Gobi desert. One is Chinese, the other a European born and brought up in Peking. They meet various queer but credible characters, have exciting adventures, and learn a lot about the customs and ancient tales of the desert peoples. Written in a clear and genial style, this one seems bound to appeal. Highly priced for a children's book, but it is uncommonly long (550 pages) and beautifully produced. *The King's Corsair*, by René Guillot (Oxford, 9s. 6d.), is a fast yarn about a sixteen-year-old buccaneer who leads a pirate crew in search of treasure in the days of Louis XIV. Infallible combination of good old ingredients, careful characterisation, and a more subtle construction than is usual in children's novels. The scene of *Knight Crusader*, by Ronald Welch (Oxford, 10s. 6d.), is the Holy Land at the time of the first crusade, with a shift to Britain towards the end of the book. The young and noble hero has an intensely exciting time, described by Mr. Welch with smooth urgency and great imaginative realisation of scene and character.

IDRIS PARRY

CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

Television Broadcasting

DOCUMENTARY

International Experiment

PRESUMABLY FOR THE technical dons the experiment in international television last Sunday was a notable achievement. As a watchful member of the viewing commonwealth, I disposed myself in front of my set with a more vigorous sense of anticipation than at any time since the Coronation. Curiosity was not only justified but satisfied. Behind the transmissions from Montreux and Rome, brought to us direct over so many miles of land and sea, one imagined much organisation, ingenuity and patience, not to say good will. They were combined into an occasion which is bound to go down as a paragraph mark in the history of communications.

For many of us, I suspect, the pictures from Switzerland were more attractive than those from Italy. Apart from supplying reassuring evidence that a continental people can take its pleasures as glumly as we do, they were concentrated on something happening. In the Vatican programme there was too much dwelling on antiquarian matters and the camera tour of walls and ceilings became tedious. Of stir and movement there was all too little, nor were the skyline shots of Rome particularly successful. The transmission came to life with the appearance of the Pope, speaking in five languages about the brotherhood of man. Not even the most fanatically reactionary viewer in Protestant England could have objected.

Admiring the programmes as an achievement in visual broadcasting, I am left in doubt about their significance to us viewers. They inspired in me no feeling that a new and saving force has come into Europe. It will be interesting to watch a real battle of flowers, say at Nice, on our screens, to see Leslie Mitchell interviewing visiting celebrities at a Cannes film festival or Berkeley Smith putting all the right questions to the *élite* of the Cresta Run. There will be much to stimulate our curiosity. One can think of more mature satisfactions: what of those? In discussing this new television advance, no voice has yet spoken reassuringly on that point beyond the noble aspirations uttered by the Pope.

If by its nature television is the tool of expediency, so much the worse, it may be, for Europe.

We may agree that the first of the Eurovision programmes was the major chord in the year's television so far. It might be hard to sustain the analogy if we also agree that music is the highest affirmation of man's concept of order in the universe. In the greatest musical works there is an organic integrity which is not as yet a distinguishing mark of the operations of television. Visual broadcasting is stressing the uncomfortable truth that we have more knowledge than we know what to do with, for the reason that so much of it is unrelated. It may be the twentieth century problem.

So powerful an instrument of persuasion

Sunday a television red-letter day. Perhaps some of them have read Burckhardt. That would be a hopeful sign. Can television reinforce the foundations on which civilisation rests? The pioneers of Eurovision have assumed a responsibility extending beyond the laboratories and control rooms and transmitting stations.

Meanwhile, the serene expression on the face of Tollund Man haunts the memory of countless viewers who had probably not heard of him before last week's programme headlined 'The Peat Bog Murder Mystery'. A solemn subject flippantly treated. It was astonishing to find Sir Mortimer Wheeler and Glyn Daniel agreeing to assist in a programme which contained errors of taste as well as of production. The Danish National Museum authorities, it seems to me, had cause to be offended by the use to which their materials were put. As the producer of 'Animal, Vegetable, Mineral?' Paul Johnstone has rarely gone astray and more often his handling of programmes has been impeccable. Here, for once, his judgement was warped. In terms of visual results, Tollund Man received much better treatment in the picture weeklies some months back.

As in other years, the Royal Tournament yielded a generous supply of good pictures for the armchair patrons and on one of the evenings the field-gun competition was more than normally exciting to watch: 'good show'. There was a film about the litter curse which had one's blessing and another film, '1820 Settlers', about the struggles of the first emigrants to South Africa, which was unworthy of its epic theme. It bore the marks of official parsimony.

In 'Holiday Fashions' we saw *élégantes* of travel, sport, and organised laziness posturing at the lowest prices. And at the Royal Festival Hall, too.

REGINALD POUND



As seen by the viewer in 'Continental Exchange' on June 6. 'The Vatican'—His Holiness Pope Pius XII entering the Consistorial Hall, and (right) the Pope delivering his message



Also in 'Continental Exchange': two shots from 'Fête des Narcisses' in Montreux—the Queen of the Festival, and (right) the famous drummers of Montreux



could perhaps aid the synthesis by which lost values might be recovered. That is a reasonable hope but, I fear, a forlorn one. Television has no theme. It is an orchestra without a conductor. It has only momentum. It does nothing to encourage discrimination. While it has a broad mandate to inform and to educate, in general it is wanting in principles acceptable to a judicial mind.

Let us salute the adventurers who made last

DRAMA

Holiday Mood

THE WEEK HAS BEEN, as many weeks are nowadays, nearly all week-end, at least for those who are not television critics. Light fare and holiday moods have prevailed. I do not grumble. At the same time I do not see why I should be expected to remember really accurately who it was hotted up 'Old Man River', who told the story about



Two shots from 'Climbing for Beginners' on June 1: making sure of a difficult foothold, and (right) a rescue stretcher for use on a cliff's face



The Royal Tournament at Earl's Court on June 4: pipes and drums of the Scottish Regiments, and (right) boys from H.M.S. Ganges in a hornpipe

Photographs: John Cura



Scene from 'Special Providence' on June 1, with (left to right) Margaret Rawlings as Aziza Mathieu, Walter Fitzgerald as Armand Germain, and Barbara Everest as Mathilde Campion



'The Secret Way' in 'Children's Television' on June 3, with (left to right) John Miller as Mr. Grant, Helen Haye as Mrs. Grant, Julia Lockwood as Alexandra, and Anthony Valentine as Cedric

the Scotsman and the Irishman, which regiment it was did precision drill at which stadium and who cared. The ear is filled in memory with cross-talk of this sort. *First Comedian*: 'D'ye know Puccini?' *Second Comedian*: 'Does it taste nice?' *F.C.* 'No, don't yer know "La Beheim"?' *S.C.* 'Never heard of it'. *F.C.* 'Don't you know "They always call me Mimi"?' *S.C.* 'Not surprised. They always call me Ethel'. And so on.

Miss Kirkwood's 'Show' again spell-bound the millions on Saturday night. What a worker! This latest edition went with a will and was, I think, a little better than the first edition we had to see. Messrs. Jewel and Warriss took a hand in the fun and together with the singing *commère* frequently raised our spirits before dashing them again. Towards the end the wit became more acute. We saw Miss Kirkwood staring up at Cleopatra's Needle on the Thames Embankment and wondering 'Did Cleopatra ever get the needle?' (which means, as all who cultivate slang know, 'Did Cleopatra ever get bored?'). The ensuing sketch you may perhaps imagine easily enough without my aid, supposing that you were unfortunate enough to miss it.

Earlier in the evening there had been another visit to the Royal Tournament, a field which I faintheartedly dispute with my colleague on the right. It was, I thought, very well done and would effectively make me feel that I need not attend it in person. This happily is not the result generally, and I believe this worthy pageant is more patronised by the public than ever before. Partly because of television, no doubt, but partly also conscription. We are all interested in rifle drill now in these H-bomb days. The commentary is spare and helpful. Seldom redundant in the style of 'Here come the cavalry, mounted on their horses'. The Life Guards and the Horse Guards bumped through yet another musical ride, an art form which television viewers are now gradually learning to recognise. Very handsome too, with intricate weavings and what I believe is called 'splendid panache'. But how oddly the music consorts with this gorgeous turn out, this imperial cavalcade. 'Aida' at the end is fitting enough, but what on earth are the old musical comedy tunes doing here?

The Marines Band of course was marvellous and many licence holders must have felt that so many bandmen all playing 'The Lost Chord' at once, was worth the licence fee in itself. Such are the great moments, and if I

found myself with a regret it was only that colour television still seems a long way off, a feeling exacerbated no doubt by having spent the afternoon at a Japanese film of such exquisite visual beauty that the television screen looked singularly cold and grey for some hours afterwards.

It would, I fear, in any case have done so, during the 'Orient Express' film which this week featured the legendary 'Von': Erich von Stroheim, 'the man you love to hate'. Now decidedly long in the tooth, his corseted military swagger gone to a Hitchcockian bulk, he looked like an old bear in a mackintosh cape with strange wooden buttons, and sat in one of those weird, slow-moving stage trains, being arrogant and overbearing towards a minx in sable who started the ball rolling with the most melodramatic cliché of them all. 'I never knew I could hate anyone so much: I never knew anyone could be so vile'. She lunged at him with her daintily manicured fingers making to scratch out the eye where once the monocle nestled. But he, as the police say, restrained her. And so it went on for thirty preposterous minutes; with glimpses of Mr. von Stroheim, whose accent seems to have grown more American, less German of late, loitering balefully about the bullyvards of Gay Paree, trying to chase an adventuress by the whiff of 'exotic' perfume on a handkerchief found on a dead crook (while the French police beat up the innocent chauffeur). I suppose thousands of people believe that this sort of thing is what goes on all the time on the Continent. A good thing, too. Cross-Channel services are shockingly overloaded as it is.

There was simply nothing to praise in this film but I found it watchable enough, just as I still find Sexton Blake readable, without often finding that I am moved to read him. But I felt sad all the same: Stroheim of 'The Wedding March' and 'Queen Kelly' was in his fantastic way a genius. That he should come to this...

In the week which has carried our minds back to the astounding June of 1944, Armand Salacrou's 'Special Providence' was well chosen by theme only. Actually this play, which not merely stretches the long arm of coincidence but simply lugs it out of the shoulder socket, is not our lively French author at his best. People seemed to object to the high-sounding discussion element more than the coincidences: they also did so, I seem to remember in 'Les Nuits de la Colère', a much more moving play. I hope the

unfavourable reception in some quarters will not put the drama department off a most fertile and interesting dramatist. There is, for instance, his 'L'Archipel Lenoir' which is family drama of an intensity we seldom get *chez* Groves, for instance, or for that matter from the authoress of the 'White Oaks' saga. Salacrou does not fight shy of 'sixth form' philosophical discussion for exactly the reason that the French themselves do not, having been taught at the Lycée that such discussion broadens the mind. It may be irritating to superior persons, but it also serves the cause of drama better than conversation directed exclusively to exploring last week's weather and what the royal family was wearing. I shall discuss 'The Mistress of Jalna' next week—news which should leave you breathless with excitement.

PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE

Sound Broadcasting

DRAMA

Globe Trotting

WE BEGIN AT a French port just after the first world war. The scene is a small dockside restaurant. Soon a ship will sail for Canada, taking with it two ex-soldier emigrants. It is called 'S.S. Tenacity', and it gives a name to Charles Vildrac's play which stole, rather diffidently, into the Third Programme, just as it edges deprecatingly on to the stage. This is one of those slight, atmospheric pieces in which we must listen between the lines. If we do not overhear much, that is our misfortune. On Sunday, though Peter Watts managed to establish us firmly enough in the café, it was time to go before we had done more than look around us and reflect a little—as presumably Vildrac would have us reflect—on the nature of freedom.

Nothing theatrical happens except that the least aggressive, more imaginative, of the men finds the pretty waitress borne off by his bolder companion ('It's neck or nothing with him'). Roger Delgado, Marjorie Westbury, and Valentine Dyall created their characters; but I shall probably think of the production for George Hayes as a talkative, elderly loafer, nicknamed 'the Eel'. At first his squeaking voice sounded tinny, artificial—I longed to lend a hand with an oil-can—but the man grew quickly with the play; before it was over he was the person most clearly visible in Madame Cordier's café. This, too, though I recognised him ('There's only one kind of real freedom, and

that's here inside yourself') as another of the sententious loiterers that linger about the Drama. I cannot really agree that, in Madame Cordier's, we should have had all this third-act imagery, this chat about rivers, currents, leaves, weather-cocks, and so on. Conversation would have been far more direct and emphatic; we should not have had to listen between the lines.

Thebes next, via Dublin. Peter Watts also produced the 'King Oedipus' of Sophocles (Home) in the picked prose version of W. B. Yeats—a version in which, for example, such a mouthful (from another modern text) as 'Where are you now, divine prognostications!' is rendered simply as 'O oracle of the gods, where are you now?' But the point of this revival was the choice of accent. Yeats, we remember, made the version for the Abbey Theatre, and here it was, interpreted by Irish voices. The play kept its marmoreal quality, but the marble was peat-smoked. As I listened to Harry Hutchinson and Tony Quinn, I could not help feeling that we should hear before long of someone 'spearing salmons in the Owen or the Carrowmore' or else reflecting that Thebes was in a state o'chassis (as indeed it was). But the tragedy conquered as always. Micheál MacLiammóir's Oedipus, strongly judged, held the imagination when, to the Herdsman's 'I am on the edge of dreadful words', he replied in the voice of the doomed: 'And I of hearing: yet hear I must'.

Last week's absorption with Hilda Tablet caused me to do less than honour to Norman Ginsbury's drama of 'The Queen's Necklace' (Home), and to Peggy Thorpe-Bates' performance of the ambitious woman with the 'sprinkling of royal blood' who duped the Cardinal, Grand Almoner of France. It is a rich part that could have been thinned to a conventional exercise. The actress charged the plotter's every syllable. While one or two of the players seemed to remain pinned to the studio, she rose immediately to urgent life. Howieson Culff (the Cardinal) and Anthony Jacobs also persuaded us in a play that contrived, under David H. Godfrey, to spirit us to Versailles, to a Court that, in a few years, would be deluged by the tidal wave of the Terror.

Back to London. In spite of its acting, I could not be excited by 'Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat' (Light), the brand of anecdote that would go better as a short story. A heart specialist has a visit from an importunate young ash-blond who urges him (so I gathered) to postpone his holiday so that, on a certain afternoon, he can watch her being run over and killed. It is all a little difficult. Is the woman a neurotic exhibitionist? Barbara S. Harper has crammed a great deal of plot into half an hour; but the tale, with its apparatus of cats, witches, anniversaries, and what-not, would move more smoothly on the printed page. On the air it was all preparation; the climax, when it came, seemed to be muffled, though Michael Hordern impressed me as the kind of no-nonsense doctor I would like to consult. Finally, to Wales and to 'Welsh Rarebit' (Light), which would have been happier if it had stuck to song. The comedy was a chain of persevering gags: one felt as one feels in the presence of a life-and-soul-of-the-party with time (and listeners) to kill. As it was, all those glorious accents were wasted, and one was left sighing for the pen of a Dylan Thomas ('And before you let the sun in, mind it wipes its shoes').

J. C. TREWIN

THE SPOKEN WORD

Education

AS A SCHOOLBOY and undergraduate I studied a limited number of subjects, each assigned to its particular days and hours in the week. Now, as pupil and critic of the B.B.C., I never know, until three days before a week begins, what new

or old fields of knowledge I shall be called upon to explore. It is all rather haphazard, rather spasmodic, compared with the old humdrum days: on the other hand, the freedom from the old monotony is refreshing and there is novelty enough to satisfy even St. Paul's Athenians.

It may have been a temporary rebellion against this freedom that led me to mark for attention last week the first of five discussions on education, called 'Schooling 1954', which are dealing with secondary education in England today. They are presided over by Norman Fisher, and in the first, called 'Grammar, Technical, or Modern?', three headmasters, each representing one of the types of school mentioned in the title, described their schools and their purposes. Was it a scripted or unscripted discussion? The fact that this question did not arise in my mind is, surely, a testimonial to its quality. What I heard, in fact, was not a performance by only too evidently amateur actors nor yet by very skilful readers, but by three highly intelligent men so full of their theme that when each aspect of it was introduced by Mr. Fisher they could instantly and without hesitation contribute their views and experiences.

The same was true of the second discussion—'Which Child to Which School?'—on the following evening. Chief Education Officer of Manchester, Director of Education for Derbyshire, Deputy Chief Education Officer, Southampton, and Consultant to the Director of the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales, are weighty, even formidable, titles, and when such functionaries get together it is natural to expect an authoritative, informative, but inevitably heavy half-hour. Liveliness is hardly to be looked for and I did not expect to be carried away, even though I knew from experience that Jack Longland could, when occasion allowed, be lively. But—to put names to these titles—Norman Fisher who presided, Jack Longland and J. J. B. Dempster who described their methods of selection, and Dr. A. F. Watts who contributed views out of his wider experience, gave us as vigorous and engrossing discussion as it has ever been my privilege to overhear.

Education was also Edward Hyams' subject in a Third Programme talk called 'Land and Life'. The title suggested an endless variety of themes—Edwardian house-parties, the habits of rabbits and moles, the ascent of Everest?—but a sub-title brought these speculations to an abrupt halt. 'The Diffusion of Garden and Orchard Fruits' pinned Mr. Hyams' theme down to education, the education by the human race of fruit. For twenty minutes he deluged us with information, but information in that delightful form in which history, legend, and guesswork are skilfully blended to stir the imagination and set the mouth watering. The Chaldeans, who lived in the blessed prephylloxera days 6,000 years ago, were probably the first, he said, to make wine, and he gave us some fascinating glimpses into the use of linguistics in tracing the ancient history of fruits. Mr. Hyams told us, too, about the apricot, cultivated in Armenia and China 3,000 years ago; plums which travelled down the centuries from north India and Syria to the tables of Virgil, Horace, and Ovid. A luscious talk, in short, packed with curious and exotic learning.

Another exciting broadcast was the first of two readings of poems by W. S. Merwin from a series called 'Physiologus: Chapters for a Bestiary'. One can't give a considered criticism of poems one has not read, and heard once only; but on this first hearing I found Mr. Merwin's poems, eloquent in the grand style and heavily charged with images, extremely exciting. The readers, Valentine Dyall, Robert Marsden, Anthony Jacobs, and Alan Wheatley, rose nobly to the occasion, letting fly on the full organ,

as was required, in poems such as 'Leviathan' and 'Blue Cockerel' and using progressively quieter and subtler combinations for 'Two Horses', 'Snail', and finally 'Mouse' with its sensitive observation and undertone of humour.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

MUSIC

Our Contemporaries

AN UNUSUALLY COPIOUS and interesting amount of new or recent music engaged our attention last week. Besides a whole programme of novelties performed under the auspices of the Institute for Contemporary Arts, there was Vagn Holmboe's Third Quartet (less attractive, I thought, than his Second which I heard the week before), Gordon Jacob's 'Laudate Dominum', Bliss' 'Colour' Symphony, a neo-Elizabethan song-cycle by Elizabeth Poston, and Janáček's opera, 'Katya Kabanova'.

The Contemporary Music concert began with Four Pieces for orchestra by Don Banks, a pupil of Mátyás Seiber and Luigi Dallapiccola, who may therefore be described as belonging to the second generation from Schönberg and Bartók. He has learnt to speak the language, subtle and iridescent, of his masters, but whether this is, in reality, the natural tongue for a young Australian without the long traditions out of which the modern central European musical idioms have evolved, it is difficult to judge from the single performance of a single work.

Humphrey Searle, whose Symphony ended the programme, speaks this language with more assurance gained from longer practice. The Symphony is obviously the most important work he has composed so far and we shall need to hear it again in order to come to terms with it. But there is no question about the complete conviction with which it is written, nor the powerful impression created by its forceful passages which, for all their violence, never sounded merely noisy. The *Adagio*, which forms the central section, has that tenseness and the luminous texture which Searle also created in his Poem for strings.

Between these orchestral works came a Mass by John Lambert and a new version of Phyllis Tate's setting of a chorus from 'The Bacchae' in Gilbert Murray's translation. The Mass, described in the old-fashioned way as being 'in D', is composed for a small choir with solo-passages and an accompaniment for wind-instruments. It sounded cheerful without being irreverent, as Haydn is—though I don't mean to imply any resemblance to Haydn's music—and would seem suitable for liturgical use at some festival of the Church.

Miss Tate's choral scene is, I understand, an arrangement for chorus and organ of the work performed at the Leeds Festival last autumn. The second and wordless chorus of the original has been transferred to the organ, thereby much simplifying the problem of performance; for the original version must have been 'the devil' to keep in tune. But, though I did not hear the original version, I fancy that the special character of the composition, the vocalised accompaniment of the words sung by the main chorus, has been lost. At least, the organ did not bind together, as the original vocal accompaniment may well have done, the blocks of harmony to which the words are set. Still, as always with this composer, the music displays an exceptional sensibility to musical texture and an individual harmonic invention. I hope some choir will be bold enough to tackle the original version and accomplished enough to sing it accurately. On this occasion the B.B.C. Chorus sang it admirably under the direction of Leslie Woodgate.

The other works were performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, who once more earned the

gratitude of contemporary composers by the efficiency and sincere musicianship of his presentation of their difficult scores.

Gordon Jacob's anthem, if that is the correct term, composed to celebrate the Coronation last year, is a straightforward piece of work, moving from the shadow of Isaiah's despair to the Psalmist's jubilation with a sure tread and a complete mastery of his material. Bliss' Symphony, played in the same programme under the direction of Sir Malcolm Sargent (happily restored to his customary vigour), is, by comparison with these other works, *vieux jeu*, full thirty years old. Yet it came up fresh as ever, strenuous, as a youthful work should be, and far fuller of real invention than it seemed when

it was new and its occasional indebtedness to Stravinsky stood out. The composer has, I think, smoothed out some of the rhythmical perversities which involved changes of metre in bar after bar. What strikes one now is the athletic vigour of this music and its clean lines—'aseptic', I had almost said, as the word applies to the forms delineated in some of his oil-paintings by Paul Nash, with which Bliss' music seems to me to have a spiritual affinity.

Janáček's opera was finely done by the Sadler's Wells company under Rafael Kubelik on the composer's hundredth birthday. I got a far better idea of its quality than I did from a previous broadcast in Czech. But it still seems to me lacking, especially in the opening scenes,

in real musical interest. 'Katya Kabanova' contains only one lyrical scene—the folk-like melodies given to Vanya and Barbara. The tragic ending is powerfully composed and moves one to pity, even though Katya, oppressed and unhappy, is not firmly enough drawn in the earlier scenes to engage our sympathy, at least in a broadcast. Edith Coates' domineering mother-in-law came over splendidly, and Norman Tucker is to be congratulated on his translation.

I can spare but a line to commend the excellent series of programmes of Venetian Music arranged by Jeremy Noble, whose introductory talk was one of the best things of this kind I have heard.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

Gluck's 'Alceste'

By ERIC BLOM

'Alceste' will be broadcast in the Third Programme at 5.30 p.m. on June 17

IN writing about 'Alceste' it is very difficult to avoid quoting from or paraphrasing the long preface which Gluck prefixed to the Italian score when it was published in Vienna in 1769, for it is impossible to discuss the work without some reference to the composer's new aims. Briefly put in the light in which we now see them, these were to turn the excessively formal serious opera of the mid-eighteenth century into music-drama with stage and musical events made interdependent.

Some scholars think that the preface was actually written by the librettist of the opera, Ranieri Calzabigi. It may have been so, not only because Italian was Calzabigi's native language, but also because it was he, quite as much as Gluck, who was responsible for the 'reforms' for which musical history too often gives all the credit to the composer. It is significant that the work in which the two first collaborated, the 'Orfeo ed Euridice' of 1762, was also the first to stir Gluck into shaking off conventions which, always rigid, were by that time showing unmistakable signs of *rigor mortis*. But whoever wrote the preface, it was signed by Gluck and represents the artistic convictions he had arrived at during the seventeen-sixties.

He had written many Italian serious operas before 'Orfeo', as well as a number of French comic ones in an entirely different style which enabled him to deal with live human characters in place of the flat, historical, cardboard figures of his works in the *opera seria* style, with librettos by Metastasio or one or another of that master's imitators.

A master Metastasio certainly was in his own line. His many librettos did to perfection, with great elegance and fine poetic diction, what the *opera seria* style demanded; complicated intrigue and a minimum of action carried on by means of recitative, intersected with strings of elaborate arias to be sung by the characters in turn, each invariably departing at the end of a number, however ridiculous these endless comings and goings might make the plot. No aria, moreover, was ever allowed to express more than one emotion, nor to advance or modify the action.

Opera, then—the kind of opera Gluck had the merit to abandon—had by the middle of his career degenerated into a mere pretence of dramatic life and into a pretext for the writing of shapely and difficult vocal concertos. The curious thing is not that Gluck himself had assiduously cultivated this sort of thing before 'Orfeo', but that he more than once reverted to it afterwards. We may understand this only if we reflect that in the eighteenth century composers did not regard themselves as missionaries offer-

ing spiritual salvation to those who did not want it, but as craftsmen supplying what their patrons required of them.

That Gluck was not bent all his life on satisfying existing demands is as well for his lasting reputation. Having married a wealthy woman in 1750, at the age of thirty-six, he had little excuse but personal pride for wanting to secure an income of his own by making concessions to prevailing tastes, and being much less of a craftsman than an originator, he could hardly pretend that such works as his conventional operas were indispensable. They are now forgotten except by musicologists, and more deservedly than those by several of his contemporaries who hardly survive even by their names.

One has only to open a full score of even so ripe a work as 'Alceste' to be at once aware of Gluck's technical limitations. The textures look threadbare, figuration is scarce and unenterprising, counterpoint all but undiscoverable, the basses are too often in root position and move sluggishly, fugal choral writing is absent, and so on. The eye is tempted to form a verdict of helplessness. But the eye has no right to be jury unless its judgement is weighed on the evidence of the ear as a witness. And the ear has circumstances to adduce which cannot fail to tell more powerfully in favour of 'Alceste' and lead to its maker's acquittal from the charge of incompetence. His skill, it is true, goes less far perhaps than that of any other master whose stature, examined all round, is comparable to his, but what matters is that it is sufficient for his purpose wherever he applies it to work for which his peculiar genius is truly fitted.

'Alceste' is in a sense a poor score; it is in no way a defective one. What it achieves no other composer, however much more highly skilled, could have attained just like that. A simplicity amounting to a certain austere plainness was exactly what was needed for a Euripidean drama transplanted into a period and treated in a medium which, between them, might have swamped it in artifice and made it ludicrous with affectations. A baroque 'Alcestis' might have been attractively quaint at best, but the baroque period was over, and a rococo 'Alcestis' would have been intolerable. Gluck's music is not Greek, it is music of the eighteenth century or nothing; but it is the produce of an eighteenth-century mind which had the tact and the taste to adjust itself imaginatively to a conception of Greek drama as artists of his time could conceive and perform it without undue distortion either in the direction of false archaism or in that of mincing modishness.

As in the case of 'Orfeo', there are two versions of 'Alceste': the original Italian one, produced at the Burg Theatre in Vienna on December 26, 1767 (not December 16), and a French version, produced at the Paris Opéra on April 23, 1776, with the libretto adapted by Leblond du Roullet, who had been Gluck's librettist for 'Iphigénie en Aulide' in 1774. 'Adapted' is the word, because the French book was not simply a translation of Calzabigi. There was an attempt to revert more closely to Euripides by bringing back the part of Hercules, who intercedes with the gods to bring Alcestis back to life after her self-sacrifice to save her husband. Calzabigi had simplified the plot by letting Apollo intervene in person as a *deus ex machina*, in return for kindness shown him by Admetus on a visit in human disguise. Unfortunately the audience hears about this visit only at second hand in the Italian version, if indeed the point is understood at all, and this weakness is removed in the French version. But although the latter is more faithful to Euripides as well as more dramatic and human, it has its own disadvantage in allowing the action to stray from its centre of interest, which is the heroine's wifely devotion to the point of death. Yet again, Admetus, who plays a sorry enough part in allowing his wife to die for him, behaves far more nobly in a version that readmits Hercules and thus shows the king as an inflexible upholder of the rules of hospitality. Rather than give his guest even a moment's discomfort, he subdues his grief and pretends that the corpse which is being carried past them is that of a stranger.

One cannot imagine a self-centred composer treating such a theme satisfactorily, or even wanting to treat it at all. The artful, almost coquettish exposure of bereavement in Mahler's 'Kindertotenlieder', for instance, does not bear thinking about in this connection, nor does the miserifying of Tchaikovsky or Puccini. Gluck, with his simple, glorious and spacious melodies, his unadorned harmonies and textures, his calm classicism, could do it superbly. He does not give us all we want from music—one misses the richness of polyphony, the fascination of detail and even a certain warmth of emotion that is not his—but what he does give is for the moment enough for anybody and more than enough for those whose sympathies lie at all in his direction. His music is very bare, but never uncomfortably or embarrassingly so. As Berlioz said, whose own music is very different, save for a certain classic coolness, but who adored Gluck: '*Aux laides femmes le luxe des atours; la nudité ne convient qu'aux déesses*'.

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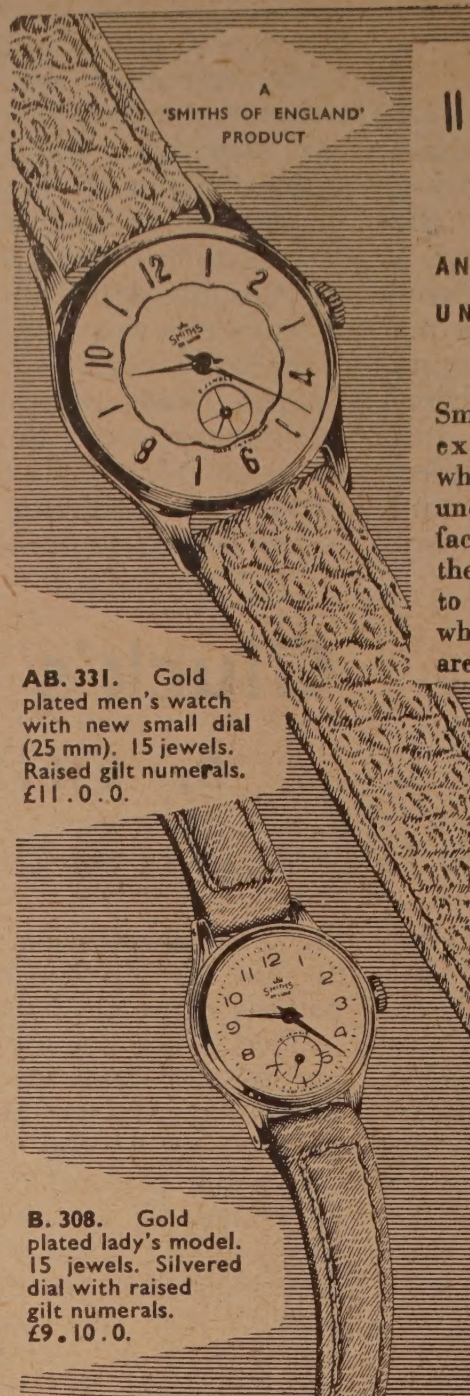
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Broadcast Suggestions for the Housewife

TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN

'GOING AWAY for the holidays' can be a trying time for families when one of the children is liable to be train sick. Lying down with the eyes closed is one of the best ways of avoiding travel sickness, though it is not very practical on trains. But a long journey can sometimes be taken by night, when there is nothing to see outside the carriage and children are likely to sleep.

In the daytime, when young people look out of the window it is a good idea to distract them from watching telephone poles whizzing past by suggesting that they should count the cows in the fields or look out for certain kinds of birds, because looking into the far distance is less tiring for the eyes.

The eyes are not the whole story. All sorts of things can bring on disaster—lack of air, smells, fatigue, food, and even the fear of being sick. So have the family well rested before starting; travel in a non-smoker and keep the window open. You should give a train-sick child a light meal, as long as possible before the journey. Then, dry biscuits on the way may stave off the pangs. Glucose tablets or barley sugar, before and during the trip, seem to be useful. But if you prefer something more reliable for a child who starts 'feeling funny, Mummy' on trains,

there are several well-known remedies you can get from the chemist yourself. Better still is a small dose of phenobarbitone taken the night before the journey and repeated on the 'great day'. For this, you need a prescription from your doctor.

ALFRED BYRNE

DRESSING A FISH SALAD

What makes a good fish salad? Undoubtedly, the sauce or dressing. And, the plainer the fish, the more exciting the sauce must be. For instance, most of you must have eaten skate, either fried or boiled. Even a common fish like this can make a wonderful cold dish when boiled and served with the following sauce. Beat up the yolks of 2 eggs in a bowl with salt and pepper. Add 1 tablespoon of mustard, 5 tablespoons of oil, and 2 of vinegar, whisking it exactly as for mayonnaise. You complete the sauce by adding 1 shallot or small onion, and 2 or 3 gherkins, all finely chopped. Add a pinch of cayenne pepper, 1 dessertspoonful of capers and a good pinch of fresh, chopped parsley. Skin and scrape the fish from the bone with a fork carefully, so as not to break it up too much, and pour the sauce over it.

There are many types of fish which can be

served in this way, such as cooked, smoked cod, hake, haddock, and another fish, rarely eaten but most abundant in this country, rock salmon. All these fish can be quickly transformed into a dish fit for *gourmets* by the addition of this simple sauce.

JEAN CONIL

Notes on Contributors

ROBERT GUILLAIN (page 991): special correspondent of *Le Monde*; recently returned from a visit to Indo-China

WILLIAM CLARK (page 995): on the editorial staff of *The Observer*

W. BRIDGES-ADAMS (page 1001) manager and producer, Liverpool Repertory Theatre, 1916-17; producer of many Shakespearean plays; supervised installation of the New Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1931-32

EDWARD HYAMS (page 1004): novelist and author of *The Grape Vine in England*, *Strawberry Cultivation*, *Soil and Civilisation*, etc.

JOHN WISDOM (page 1015): Professor of Philosophy, Cambridge University, since 1952; author of *Other Minds*, *Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis*, etc.

Crossword No. 1,258.

Spiral Chequers—III.

By Fez

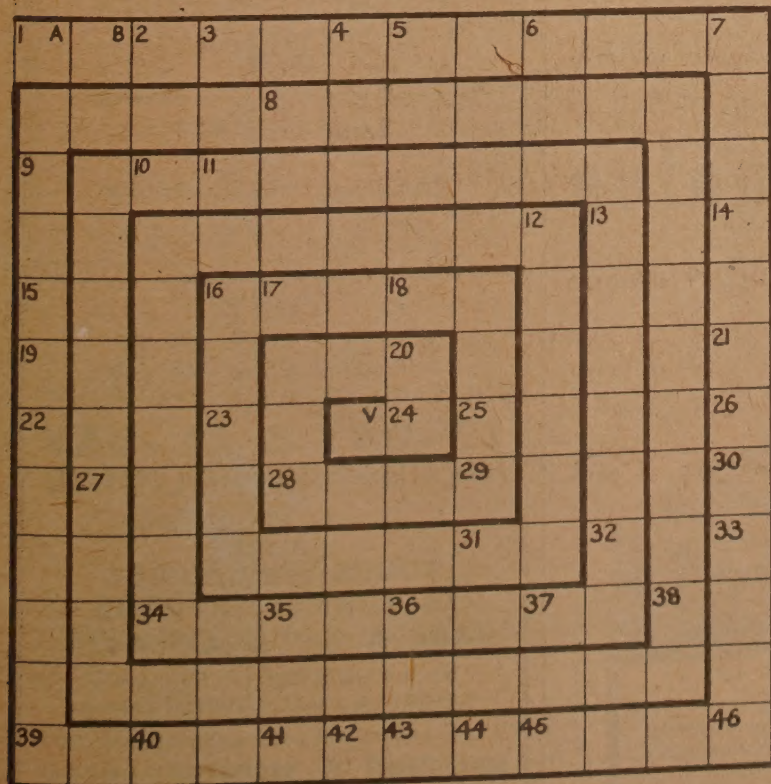
Prizes (for the first three correct solutions opened): Book tokens, value, 30s., 21s., and 12s. 6d. respectively

Closing date: First post on Thursday, June 17

There are two types of lights:

Set A.

These lights are inserted in alternate squares along the spiral. The next light is inserted in the same way beginning at the first blank square. Thus, if clue A led to an eight-letter light and clue B a ten-letter light, then light A would begin in the square marked A and end at 14 and light B would begin in the square marked B and end at 33. Light C would begin in the first blank square, i.e., square containing number 21. The last word of this set ends in square marked V.



Set B.

These consist of across, down, up, and four diagonal lights and go direct from one number to the other, e.g., 4-42 is a twelve-letter light (down clue).

Ignore punctuation in all clues. (R = reversed.)

CLUES

Set A.

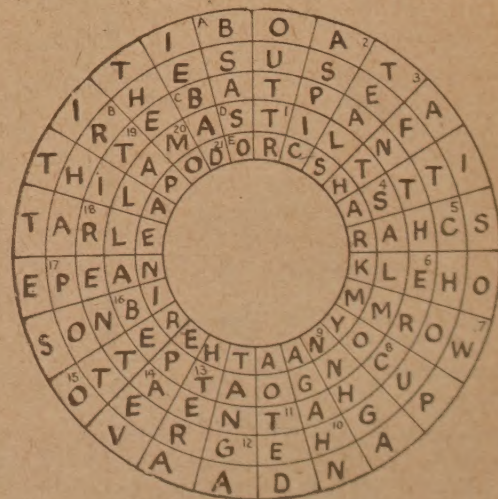
- A. This ewe is two.
- B. Unite a medicine unaccented.
- C. Outcrop of confused beasts.
- D.(R). Formal leave.
- E. . . . he graved cherubims, lions . . . and — roundabout.
- F. She helped to deceive her husband and 'stole the birthright'.
- G. Strong virtue.
- H. Japanese ruler little less than a fowling piece.
- I. This insect has its day.
- J. All I force together a hundred backward secret intriguers.
- K. Marginal reading in Hebrew bible.
- L. Cotton-cleaning machine.
- M. Plane 44-31 perpetual.
- N. To seize Pluto heads the retinue.
- O. Raise a nap. Fifty shillings raises a nap.
- P.(R). Incomplete. (Hyphen.)
- Q. My Oberon! what — have I seen!
- R. The Deity affirmed the chopper in the middle.
- S. Wed mixed Spenserian please.
- T.(R). A self evident fact has us mixed in good order.
- U. Tender.

Set B.

- 1-24. Partly responsible for G. (7)
- 7-20. Counting uncles are disturbed after losing nineteen shillings. (6)
- 28-39. Flowing hand untangles a tangle. (5)
- 29-46. Scrape a Scottish cormorant and leave more than a mark. (5)
- 10-2 and 3-11. Look! Break rank to delay. (6)
- 4-42. Punch's watchword? (from the crib!). (4 words, 12)
- 5-18. Turkish local governor. (5)

- 12-6. Without function. (4)
- 8-17. Fetter in a dingy ventilator. (4)
- 13-14 and 32-33. Plunge a dagger in a friend? The reverse you mole-rats. (6)
- 16-15. Bishop in one of the digestive ferments. (4)
- 19-21. St. Eloy is their patron. (12)
- 23-22. Pass over the captain's head. (4)
- 25-26. See 29-30. (5)
- 27-28. A child disturbs a sebaceous cyst. (4)
- 29-30. 'Had he rained all kinds of — and 25-26's, on my bare head. (5)
- 44-31. See M. (4)
- 38-37 and 35-41. Indra's charioteer. (6)
- 37-45 and 43-36. To fondle. (6)
- 40-34 and 10-9. Latest thigh armour. (6)

Solution of No. 1,256



NOTES

Ai. hoBO At. ii. watch iT Alm in. iii. shed (iS OWned. iv. the maP AND At. v. centAVO SET will. vi. knoT IT I will. Bi. singer HES USING. ii. the reEF There. iii. arCH OUGHt. iv. to bEG REturn v. stOP A Habst. Ci. grab AT spices. ii. the sPAN THERE. iii. teaCH AT all. iv. oNE AT the races. v. miNER I TELl workers. Di. Top'S TILting. ii. One pSALM Only. iii. carGO ATtested. iv. your piPE Back. v. to caLL A MAN can. Ei. fOR Cakes. ii. playS HARK the herald. iii. so MY NAME. iv. and fATHER I NEed. v. not a peAPOD. 1. short ROUTe. 2. camellIAS PICKed. 3. wasTE ALtogether. 4. hiS Alm. 5. if eAcH ARrives to lend rafts. 6. steEL Knives have done. 7. you saW OR My. 8. deCOY PUt on at or about. 9. wheN A Great aunt. 10. foolish AGent. 11. the set TO ADhere. 12. a siGN AT last. 13. senT HARDware. 14. that chaP Eat. 15. ballOT TERraces. 16. cluB IS ONe. 17. that chaP EAst. 18R. gRATE Long. 19. aTT A PIRate 20. be warM OTHer aid. 21. caddIE Bring.

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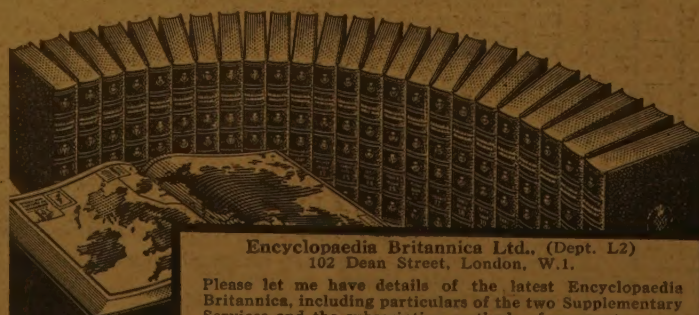
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